



Excellence Of Na'at

CONDITIONS AND STANDARDS

Dr. Aziz Ahsan

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of ALLAH, The Benificent, The Merciful

EXCELLENCE OF NA'AT CONDITIONS AND STANDARDS

Dr. Aziz Ahsan

(ڈاکٹر عزیز احسن)



Naat Research Centre, Karachi.

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Dedication:

To all,

Na'at lovers;

Na'at writers;

Na'at promoters;

Na'at poets

Engaged in promoting spirit of eulogizing the

Messenger of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ)

Muhammad ﷺ

(عزیز احسن)

(Aziz Ahsan)

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FOREWORDS

Dr. Saleem Ullah Jundran

A Journey towards The Glory and Glorification of Na’atia Poetry!

“If I only had three words advice, they would be,
tell the truth, if got three more words, I’d add, all the time.”

(The Last Lecture By Professor Randy Pausch)

Search for the best has been always a natural desire everywhere. Actually, the whole philosophy of life and death revolves around the objective of doing best. The Creator of life and death declares:

“He has power over all the things; Who created death and life that He may test you as to which of you is best in deeds.” (Surah Al-Mulk: 1-2)

The same has been emphasized: “Surely We (Allah) adorned the earth with whatever is on it, so that We (Allah) may test them as to which of them is best in conduct.”(Surah Al- Kahf: 07)

The Quran witnesses to the fact: “Certainly human being has been created on the best nature.”(Surah Teen: 4)

Allah Almighty expects the best deed from every one. Allah blessed us with the best and the perfect practical role model- an embodiment of the best (perfect) attribute in each and every walk of life, i.e., the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ). His each and every manner stands “Excellent” for all times to come. The Holy Quran verified:

“And surely, you possess the highest moral excellence.” (Al-Qalam:4)

Allah Almighty reveals for us:

“Certainly you have an excellent model in following the Rasool (Messenger) of Allah. This is (ideal model) for the one who has hope in Allah and the last Day and remembers Allah too much.(Surah Al-Ahzab: 21)

Human body has been endowed with numerous faculties of head and heart. Speech faculty is one of the

most distinguished faculties. The Creator Almighty teaches in the Holy Quran:

“And say to my devotees that they should (only) say those words that are the best.”(Surah Al-Isra: 53)

At another place, it has been advised:

“and speak good to people.” (Surah Al- Baqarah:83)

When a person intends to speak to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, thereby, Allah Almighty specially ensures and particularizes the most respectful communicative content and style of the speaker:

“Do not speak aloud in his presence as you speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds become vain while you are unaware.”(Surah Al-Hujurat: 02)

It has been strictly warned:

“O you who believe! Say not (to Allah’s Messenger) “Rai’ina” but say “Unzurna”. (Surah Al- Baqarah: 104)

It shows that the utterance of the slightest undignified word non-befitting for the highest status of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is totally forbidden, even, when insult is not intended. So, one should avoid using ambiguous words in respect of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) which could give anyone an opportunity of causing any slander. Allah Almighty Himself is teaching us the most dignified manner of addressing the Holy Prophet ﷺ through His Divine Decrees. (Noor-ul-Irfan: English Commentary of the Holy Quran)

As a matter of universal principle, the Creator Almighty expects the use of best words in the best style from human being who has been created on the best nature. But, whenever, one is going to submit his/her oral or verbal communication into the most majestic court of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ whatever, may be the mode or medium ,either prose or poetry, in any language, there is always extremely needed highest sense of reverence and respect in the selection and use of most appropriate words, style and tone syntactically and

semantically. The precedence of the prestigious companions of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Zuhammad ﷺ in adopting the most respectful style of requesting or praising the Holy Prophet ﷺ is illuminating for all of us in both prose and poetry mode for all times to come.

Na'at is the praise of the Prophet Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ in the poetical medium. Ram Babu Saksainah as cited in Dr. Muhammad Hassan (2005), all languages of the world have taken their origin from the poetry (versification) which implies that occurrence of prose has been found in all languages next to poetry Abdul-Rehman (1995) quotes:

“ if we look back to the primitive beginnings of any race, however, we see that poetry starts with some practical purpose in mind that can be called religious whether of praise, propitiation or incantation”.
(P.316)

Donald A. Stauffer (1971) writes about the nature of poetry that “Poetry is exact” (P.469). Poetic exactness consists in the unique individuality of each complete poetic

expression. Stauffer further states that poetry is intense and passionate. The significance of poetry is primarily a moral significance. Even, it may be considered as the most effective of moral agents. Poetry is also rhythmic. And finally, “poetry is formal” (P.471).

Samuel Johnson defines poetry as “the art of uniting pleasure with truth by calling imagination to the help of reason” (P.331).

Samuel Taylor Coleridge asserts: “the best words in the best order” (P. 331).

T. S. Eliot says about poetry: “not the assertion that something is true, but the making of that truth more fully read to us” (P.331).(Cited in X. J. Kennedy,1966)

Dr. Mahmudur Rehman (2004) writes that since the inception of Islam, fourteen centuries ago, Na’at has had been recognized as the crown of poetry. It is an undeniable fact that wherever the Muslims are found in this world and whichever language they use to speak, they have produced a variety of Na’at. For Example, in Arabic, Persian,

Turkish, Chinese, Urdu, Hindi Bangla, Pushto, Blochi, Sindhi, Saraiki, Punjabi, Kashmiri, etc.,etc. Na'ats of much high quality have been written. Even in English language, the poets have attempted most excellently to compose verses in praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Mehdi Ali Siddiqi (Eng.Trans.,1987) notes that the term 'Na'at' is applied to a poetic composition eulogizing the personality of the Prophet ﷺ in all its virtues and graces. Muhammad Ather Javed (1992) submits that Muslims all over the world have the deepest love and reverence in their hearts for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and they are constantly busy in paying their humble homage to him ﷺ. Poets all over the world have also been singing encomiums in his ﷺ praise. Professor Muhammad Saleem Bhatti (2000, November 15) most humbly relates that Hamd and Na'at is not as easy field to strive. It requires love, sincerity, devotion, and dedication to understand the nature of its sanctity and greatness of the highest degree which is measureless to human- being. He adds:

“But, we are to make efforts, praising, singing and spreading our humble love, feelings and praises that we have for the most beloved personality whom Allah Almighty praises. This is never ending source of light for the character building, nourishment of innocent minds and without difference, young old and the oldest ones.” (PP VI-VII)

Because,

“Muhammad, for whom are all praises

Our hopes in good destinies that it raises.” (P.48)

“Aziz, noble and dear to all

Ready to hold, those about to fall”. (P.53)

(Muhammad Arshad Chaudhary, 1993)

“Zaat hoi intikhab, wasf hooay lajawab

Nam hoowa Mustafa, tum peh karoaroan Durood” (Imam Ahmad Raza Khan)

(English Transliteration of Imam Ahmed Raza Khan's Urdu Na'atia couplet by SU Jundran)

“You became the Elect One, with traits unmatched by anyone,

You were named the Chosen One, billions of blessings be upon you!”

(Versified English Translation: Aqib Al- Qadri, 2015)(P.54)

Linda Hess and Annemarie Schimmel (1987) used the term of “natiyah poetry” in the Encyclopedia of Religion under the title of “Poetry in Honour of the Prophet ﷺ. They explain that throughout the history of Islam and in all languages of the Islamic world, poets have expressed ardent praise and love for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It is being quoted from therein:

“As the love of the Prophet has been called the strongest binding force in Islam, the theme may provide an appropriate summation for this survey of Islamic religious poetry.” (P.388)

Hess and Shcimmel further state that all poetic styles and forms, from the simplest to the most sophisticated are called into service to extol Muhammad ﷺ, the supreme exemplar, “ the radiance of both worlds.” (P.388)

Dr. Aziz Ahsan is a prolific Na’at Writer. His doctoral study and post doctoral research works are related to Na’at literature. Ma sha’ Allah Ta’ala! His Na’atia poetry consists of voluminous Kulliyaat. Na’at Research Centre Karachi (Pakistan) has published his several research papers and research works. Locally and internationally, he is recognized in Na’at Circles. The Na’at poet Aziz Ahsan has produced particularly evaluative and judgmental literature pertinent to the quality and standard of Na’atia poetry. Definitely, quantity of Na’atia poetry is to increase by each passing day. Every heart beats with the love of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Every eye seeks light for life of this world and hereafter from the foot-prints of the Holy Prophet sall-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa aalihee wa sallum. Every bosom finds enlightenment from the remembrance of the Prophet’s ﷺ

attributes. Every tongue's speech faculty becomes elevated when it gets glorified with the praises of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Allah Almighty has promised to keep highly exalted his ﷺ remembrance for ever. That's why the volume, the magnitude, the quantity and the literary asset of Na'at poetry is getting more popular, larger and richer by every coming moment.

“Excellence of Na'at: Conditions and Standards” by Dr. Aziz Ahsan is a realization call, respectful request , cordial invitation and Na'at poetry manual for all Na'at poets of all languages and all regions that they should have due regards and careful consideration for acquiring the excellence standards in their Na'at versification. This work also informs us about the warning of severe punishment if somebody shows even minutest or slightest sort of carelessness in the selection of words or style which are not befitting for the dignity and glory of the highest ranked personality ,i.e.,Hazrat Muhammad sall-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa aalihee wa sallum.. This critic of Na'at literature has presented examples of Divine endowments upon the

presentation and composition Na'at quoting from the most prestigious pages of the Quran and Hadith. Thereby the critic poet has presented in his book very strict conditions, standards, parameters and criteria laid down in the Quran and the Sunnah for the Na'atia poetry. The central chapters of this book entitled as “Principles of Composing General Poetry”, Quranic Teachings Pertaining to Poetry” and “Poetry’s Practical Examples Laid Down in Presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ serve the purpose of primary guidelines for Na'at poets. Towards the conclusion of his book, Dr. Aziz Ahsan mentions Mazhar Jan-e-Janan’s Persian Na'at couplets whose English translation he renders as:

“Allah سبحانه تعالی Does Not Expect any praise from us.

Muhammad ﷺ (also) does not wish to be praised (by us).

Allah سبحانه تعالی alone is sufficient to glorify His Messenger ﷺ.

Muhammad ﷺ is also enough for glorification of Almighty Allah سبحانه تعالی”. (P. 13)

Maulana Qasim Nanotvi submits in his Urdu Na'at:

“Who can adequately sing the praises of Muhammad

O Allah,

On whom You bestow so much love,

O Allah” (P.103)

(Versified English translation by Dr.Ghulam Ali Allana,1987)

Thus, it is needed that all Na'at poets' intention should be truly the pleasures of Allah Almighty and His most beloved Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ). They should never ever show any touch of falsehood or exaggeration in their Na'at writings. Human Effort must reflect there upto optimal level for the usage of the best words in the best order for the glorification of the most beloved Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ). Hazrat Hamzah Bin Abd Al-Muttalib Bin Hashim (Razi Allah-o-anho) has said in his Arabic encomium of the Holy Prophet sall-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa aalihee wa sallum:

“He is exalted amongst us

And so he is obeyed.

Take care that no unkindly word

Against him should be said.”(P.05)

(Versified English translation by Matlubul Hasan Sayyid, 1987))

The topic of Na’at is included into all languages subject from school to university level. It is also reflected into other Disciplines, i.e., History, Islamic Culture and Islamic Studies, etc. The evaluation or judgment of Na’at literature or the literary criticism of Na’at literature will promote the cause of Na’at literature adornment and excellence. Al Hamd-o-Lillah! Voluminous editions of Na’atia poetry are now available in the world of local and international literature. The research for the excellence in Na’at literature, in sha’ Allah Ta’ala, would be helpful for the classic development of Na’at writings. The excellent models of Na’at writings should be perused and consulted for this purpose. As an example, Na’at written by Hazrat Hassan Bin Sabit Razi Allah-o- anho has also been included into this book among many other Na’ats presented

by the Sahabah (Razi Allah-o-anhum) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Those all Na'at specimens of excellent standard may be good guide for seeking excellence standard in Na'at writing. One has to observe certain prescribed conditions, parameters, yardsticks and criteria to reach at the quality level in any field of literature. The field of Na'at is very delicate and thoughtful in this regard.

Na'at-

Academies,Circles,Councils,Foundations,Institutes,Publishing Houses,Research Centres and Study Centres should pay heed towards excellent standards of this classic genre.The literati of Na'at Literature should project the topic of Na'at Excellence in their writings.The curriculum developers and syllabus designers of Urdu,Arabic,Persian,English,Islamic Studies,History of Pakistan,Islamic Culture,Linguistics and Literature may include the study of this great genre within the domain and level of their Discipline or Subject.The specific use of a language for this specific purpose can be initiated. For example, English for Specific Purpose of Business , Science and Technology is already in

practice. Why not English for Transmission of Islamic Culture (ETIC)! The use of words in any language is very much significant in view of its religio-socio-cultural context and psycho-linguistic perspective.

It has been well cited by Allama Kokab Norani Okarvi in “Na’at Rang” Issue No. 18, Dec 2005, P. 359 :

“Rah ber ki rah-e-Na’at mai(n) gar haajet ho

Naqsh-e-qadam Hazrat Hassan buss hai.”

(English transliteration of Imam Ahmed Raza Khan’s Urdu Na’atia couplet by SU Jundran)

English Translation:

Anyone who is in need of guide on the path of Prophet’s Na’at,

For him, foot-prints of Hazrat Hassan are the best resort.

(SU Jundran)

It implies that whosoever is needful of guidance for the art of Na’at writing he may seek the light from the

excellent models of Na’at written by Hazrat Hassan Bin Sabit Razi Allah-o-anho in the area of Na’at writing. It would boost up his passion, enhance his knowledge, enlarge his vision, illumine his thought, increase his love, enkindle his feelings and bring him glory and excellence in Na’at kingdom.

To sum up, it looks and we wish this period as an era of Na’at! May it move towards excellence! In sha’ Allah Ta’ala, every new morning will glow with the praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in excellent word and excellent style! There is a great glad-tiding for everyone who is in quest of excellence in every good deed.

Hazrat Ayesha Siddiqah Razi Allah-o anha reports that Holy Prophet sall-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa aalihee wa sallum stated:

“Allah Almighty likes it that whenever a person among you does some deed he may do it in an excellent manner.” (Musnad Abu Ya’hla)

It would be highly desirable if Provincial and Federal Ministries of Religious Affairs and Pakistan Academy of Letters compile excellent specimens of Na'at from different eras of history in different languages of the world. World Literature Forums may publish some excellent selection from world Na'at literature. National University of Modern Languages can conduct linguistic cum literary research upon Na'at literature of Modern Languages for the quest of Na'at excellence.

Keeping in view the title of the this book, it needs to be acknowledged here that terms, conditions, criteria, eligibilities, requirements and standards in any domain or discipline are determined and decided by the competent authorities of that domain or discipline. Primarily, the topic of this book, i.e., Na'at belongs to the domain of religion. So, the Quran and the Sunnah are the Competent Authorities to decide the pre-requisite conditions and standards for Na'at composition, Na'at presentation and Na'at recitation. Although fondness for Na'at is found in the deepest core of every Muslim's heart. Several non-muslims'

fondness for Na'at has also been found exemplary. However, it becomes the duty and privilege of experts of Islamic Studies that they may derive a well defined point-wise list of operational criteria and set of standards from the Quran and Sunnah which may work as a guidance manual for Na'at poets. Research can be conducted at M.Phil, Doctorate Level in the Universities Islamic Studies Department upon this plan. i.e., A Study of Standards Set for Na'at Excellence in the Light of Quran and Sunnah . This study would be very precious service for the Islamic literature of Na'at in all languages. The topic towards which Mr.Aziz Ahsan has drawn the attention of Na'at poets basically demands the special services of Islamic studies Experts both from the public and private sector. An initial work upon poetry selection criteria for Compulsory English Curriculum was accomplished at doctoral level in the Institute of Education & Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore in 2011. Thereby, a set of fifteen points criteria was developed from local and international literature for the selection of poetry for compulsory English curriculum. This doctoral project.,i.e., "The Selection of

Poetry for Inclusion into Compulsory English Curriculum Grade Six to Ten” reached its completion under the supervision of Associate Professor of Education, Dr.Muhammad Saeed Shahid. This project contained the process of Delphi Technique for evaluation of poetry in three consecutive rounds through Delphi Ranking Forms furnished by the Poetry Evaluators. But, whenever, we are concerned with the matter of Na’at selection or Na’at evaluation upon the parameters of Na’at excellence, thereby, we would need the specialized services of Islamic Studies Experts, too.

Al-Hamd-o-Lillah! This globe is enriched with such multiple intellectuals, academicians, literati and artists who have specialized expertise in both areas, i.e., Islamic Studies and Literature (Poetry), too. They can deliver better skilled services. Otherwise, coordinated services from these both areas can be more beneficial in this perspective. So, further research in this regard can be initiated from the oriental languages and literature departments of Universities at M.phil or Ph.D level. Apart from degree

awarding research fulfillment work, this desired task can be undertaken on honorary basis as a noble pursuit of pleasure , satisfaction and knowledge dissemination. It needs to be expressed here for the kind perusal of all those intellectuals, academicians, Na’at Scholars that journey towards Na’at excellence needs the teaching of Na’at Studies as a specialized subject at MS or M.Phil level. This specialized study will require the faculty position of Na’at Studies Lecturer or Research Associate in Languages and Literature Departments and Islamic Studies Departments. The proposed Course Outline of Na’at Studies Subject may contain the major topics like:

The literal and literary meanings of Na’at;

Primary objectives of Na’at;

Significance of Na’at;

Na’at into the annals of history;

An overview of Na’atia World Literature;

Na’at and Pakistan Movement;

Na’at literature development in Pakistan;

Inclusion of Na'at into prevalent curriculum (ECE to Ph.D level);

Na'at as an integral part of co-curriculum from school to parliament;

Versified translations of Na'at;

Impact of Na'at upon human character development;

Impact of Na'at upon overall literature enrichment;

And

Prominent Na'at selections from non-muslim authorship, etc.

So, it is wished, needed and prayed that this very tiny and very humble step towards the excellence of Na'at journey may soon have the blessed company of other fortunates to cover the distance up to the establishment of Na'at Excellence Centres in our universities where Permanent Professors of Na'at Studies Subject may look working as its path finders! Quite recently announced Rehmatul-lil-Alameen Authority and Universities Seerat Chairs can also render excellent services for this journey of Na'at excellence.

Although this work lacks narrative flow at some places yet this work is highly need-based.

The respected author of this book (Honoured Aziz Ahsan) deserves heartiest congratulations. He has devoted his post-retirement life for the development of consecutive writings related to evaluation, judgment, standardization, adornment, embellishment and excellence of Na'atia Poetical Literature. Al- hamd-o-Lillah ! Allah Almighty blessed me humble person ,too, with the opportunity of making this humblest submission in the form of Foreword to this work of classic category. I truly feel very much pleasure upon this endowment of humble penmanship for this meritorious task.

Boundless thanks to the Creator Almighty and countless Salutations to the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ !

Best wishes for all respectable readers, writers, listeners, reciters, evaluators and researchers of Na'at genre,

I conclude this Foreword at quoting line from Noori
(Sayyidah Musarrat Jahan Begum Shafique)’s Urdu Na’at :

“My faculty and speech are perplexed—I have to
and yet what can I pen”?? (P.149)

(Versified English Translation by M.N.A.Baig,1987)

@Saleem Ullah Jundran

Saturday: 9th Rabiul Awwal 1443 Hijri

16th October 2021 A.D.

.....
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PREFACE

By the grace of Almighty Allah (سبحانہ تعالیٰ) I am engaged for the last 41 years in creating, promoting and pursuing critical norms for the aesthetics of Na'atia Poetry. "Jawahir-un-Na'at" was compiled in 1981 and its foreword gained popularity so much that the book was given to "Jang" Karachi for book review in March or in April, 1982. And "Jang" published full text of the foreword in the paper on 7th June, 1982. This text was picked up by Sindh Information Department's Journal "Izhar" and afterwards, selected by the Editor of "Auj" Saheed Professor Aftab Naqvi, for "Na'at Number" (1992-1993). This popularity of only my 12 paged forewords infused in me the spirit to strive hard to promote my ideas regarding better development of Na'at rendering trends. It was also the great blessing of Almighty Allah (سبحانہ تعالیٰ) that I met Sabih Rahmani in 1994 and my article (Careless usage of Language and Narrative in Na'atia Poetry) "نعتِ نبی میں زبان و بیان کی" appeared in the first issue of "Na'at Rang" in April 1995. This article also gained much appreciation of scholars. This encouragement paved the way for my constant involvement in the subject. Al-Hamdo-Lillah by

now 22 books have been published besides 30 Issues of Na'at Rang containing my little contributions.

I am neither academically a Professor nor an English writer. I remained busy in Accounts/Audit profession till 2009. After retirement from my service, I took admission in Ph.D and got Degree in 2012 on the basis of my thesis "اردو نعتیہ ادب کے انتقادی سرمائے کا تحقیقی مطالعہ". The book got published in 2013.

This history has been narrated in order to seek pardon from English knowing audience for my poor English as my educational back ground was never an English Medium.

This is my first attempt to adopt English for expressing my views.

I desire to record my heartiest gratitude to a scholar of the subject of "Na'at", Dr. Saleem Ullh Jundran who felt heartiest pleasure to guide me for arranging chapter wise content of the book. He has also gone through the text verbatim and suggested profound points to adopt for its betterment.

I am also thankful to Sabih Rahmani who continuously persuaded me to furnish the task of writing a book for English knowing audience, speakers, readers and writers for apprising them towards this glorified subject

matter. I am indebted to all the writers, poets of Na'at whose texts have been used in this treatise. I owe thanks for all translators of any Text of any language i.e., Arabic, Persian and Urdu into English, whose quotations are appeared in my text to illuminate the point. They all deserve my humble gratitude and salutations.

It is prayed that Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) may accept my humble renderings and call me not to account if I omit to do my duty properly. I would end up my submissions by borrowing words from Imam Busiri (رحمته الله عليه):

يا ربِّ بالمصطفى بلغ مقاصدنا
واغفر لنا ما مضى يا واسع الكرم

"O Lord! On behalf of Chosen One fulfil our good aims I claim;

The All Comprehending, the Generous forgive acts of shame".

(English Translation: Ahmad Mahmood uz Zaman).

(عزیزاً حسن)

Aziz Ahsan.

Saturday 17th Shawwal 1442A.H. 29th May, 2021.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of writing on this topic is to illumine English reading and English speaking community with the tradition of Na'atia Poetry and its sensitivity. These renderings are to invite their attention towards sacredness and significance of Na'atia poetry.

Today the Progressive poets in Pakistan and India are also paying heed to Na'atia poetry. It is clear sign of understanding usefulness of such devotional poetic renderings for human society. It has now been accepted that only “ROLE MODEL” for humankind is the majestic, glamorous and charismatic personality of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The day has come to get understood and spread this reality in all over the world in prose and poetry writings of each and every language of the universe.

Al-Mighty Allah (الله سبحانه وتعالى) has proclaimed in Surah Al-Ahzaab Aayat 56. i.e.,

“God (الله سبحانه وتعالى) and His (الله سبحانه وتعالى) angels bestow blessings on the Prophet (ﷺ). O believers, you also

should invoke blessings on him (ﷺ) and give him (ﷺ) greetings of peace”¹.

Eulogizing and saluting are poetic activities for invoking blessings on the Prophet (ﷺ) in compliance of the orders of Almighty Allah (الله سبحانه وتعالى). Salat-o-Salam upon Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) have had been always the most prominent topics of Na’atia poetry in all ages and all languages.

Dr. Riaz Majeed (1984) explains that Durood-o-Salam is very approved sort of Na’at style. The Qur’anic reference of Salat-o-Salam has made the topic of “Durood-o-Salam” the most distinguished and the most prominent topic of Na’atia poetry. Salat-o-Salam has become a permanent topic of Na’atia poetry for seeking virtues and intercession (Shafaa’t) of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Riaz Majeed further writes that Na’at poets have adopted multiple manners of “Salam” writing and “Salam” reciting into the most majestic court of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Salam-o-Salat has significantly contributed towards development of Na’atia poetry.

¹ The Quran, Translated by: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The beautiful example of salutations is found in the poetic work of Ahmad Raza Khan رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. The starting couplet of his magnum opus Salaam is depicted here:

مصطفیٰ جانِ رحمت پہ لاکھوں سلام
شیعِ بزمِ ہدایت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon .The Chosen one-the Soul of Mercy

Countless salutations be upon the Divine candle of assembly of guidance (the straight path)².

Besides composing “Salam”, lots of books also got published with the title of Durood i.e. (ﷺ). The titles of books and couplets or Na’atia poems incorporated in the books were particularly carry Radeef (the last word in poetic line repeated in the whole poem) i.e. صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم.

For example we can mention the titles of Na’at books as under:

² Salam-e-Raza, English translation by Bashir Hussain Nazim, p.11.

1. Allahumma Sall-e-Ala Muhammad (اللهم صل على محمد) Riaz Majeed Dr.
2. صلى الله عليه وسلم (An anthology of Na'atia poetry containing Radeef of صلى الله عليه وسلم), compiled by Raz Kashmiri.
3. Sallu Alaihe Wa Aalehi (صلوا عليه وآله), Hafeez Ta'ib.
4. Wa Sallemu Taslima (وسلموا تسليماً), Hafeez Ha'ib.
5. Maula ya Salle Wasallem (مولاي صل وسلم), Sajid Saeed Sajid.
6. Na'at-o-Salaam, نعت وسلام Wahida Naseem etc. etc.

It is always be kept in mind that there should not be aimless wanderings in the valley of poetry as is hinted in Aayat 225 of Surah As-Shu'ara [The Poets 26].

Extreme sense of thoughtfulness is demanded from the Poet/Reciter that he/she is before the sacred abode of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The act of composing or reciting Na'at needs very cautious type of meditative attitude for supplicating into the most majestic court of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

LOVE OF ALLAH'S PROPHET ﷺ IS FAITH:

Hazrat A'raj (رضى الله عنه) has reported from Hazrat Hurairah (رضى الله عنه) that Allah's Rasool (ﷺ) said:

"By Him (الله سبحانه وتعالى) in Whose control my life is, none of you can be believer until I may become dearer to him than his father and progeny".³

Hazrat Anas (رضى الله عنه) reports that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"None of you can be a believer until unless I may become dearer to him than his father, his progeny and all mankind".⁴

NA'AT WRITING: The sunnah of the holy Prophet ﷺ , A prominent practice of the Sahaba (رضوان الله عليهم):

Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine presents list of 188 companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) who composed Na'at of the Prophet (ﷺ). This list was copied down from the book of renowned master of Hadith and historian Ibn Sayyid Al-Nas, entitled Minah al-Madh (The Gifts of praise). The scholars of Encyclopaedia added the name of Hazrat Aisha bint Abi Bakr (رضى الله عنها) in the list and

³ Hadith 14, page 117 Vol. 1, Sahih Bukhari

⁴ Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No.15, Page 118/1

commented that the list provided by Sayyid Al-Nas was not comprehensive.⁵

⁵ Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine, As –Sunna Foundation of America Publications, Volume 2, 607A W.Dana St. Mopuntain View, CA94041, Page 70

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2. Bashir Hussain Nazim, Salam-e-Raz Idara-I-Tehqeeqate-E-Imam Ahmad Raza International, Islamabad, first Edition: 1422/2001,P.11.
3. Sahih Bukhari,Hadith 14, page 117 Vol. 1.
- 4.Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No.15, Page 118/1
5. Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine, As –Sunna Foundation of America Publications, Volume 2, 607A W.Dana St. Mopuntain View, CA94041, Page 70.

POETRY

Poetry is a form of expression that reveals inner life of universe. Sentiments, feelings and emotions of human being subtly find space in the words of poetic renderings.

Wikipedia defines poetry as follows:

“Poetry (derived from the Greek poiesis, "making") is a form of literature that uses aesthetic and often rhythmic qualities of language—such as phonaesthetics, sound symbolism, and metre—to evoke meanings in addition to, or in place of, the prosaic ostensible meaning”.¹

DEVOTIONAL POETRY:

Devotional poetry is based upon faith and faith requires leading life purposefully. To know the purpose of life one has to consult Doctrine of the Creator for creating universe and human being i.e., Qur'an, the Book of the Allah (الله سبحانه وتعالى) states the purpose of life and death is the test of conduct. Qur'an says:

¹ Wikipedia on Poetry

“He created death and life so that He might test you,
and find out which of you is best in conduct”.²

Maulana Wahiddin Khan elaborates the meaning as under:

“Man in this world is living under testing conditions.
A test essentially demands freedom of action. This
freedom of action has given the opportunity to human
beings to create disturbance and imbalance in the
world”.³

In this situation, every skilled nature, genius or
instinct given to the man by Almighty Allah (اللہ سبحانہ تعالیٰ)
requires to be used to fulfil the purpose of life. Poetic
instinct has been bestowed upon man by Allah (اللہ سبحانہ تعالیٰ),
hence its use be in conformity with the purpose of life i.e.,
to show the best of conduct in poetic utterance and action.

Na’atia poetry is the poetic rendering, written out of
devotional sentiments, expressed with reverence, keeping
in view the high esteem of a person/personality. Na’atia
poetry is specifically devoted and dedicated for the greatest
personality of the universe, i.e., Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ

² (الملک، آیت 1، 67:1)

³ The Qur’an translated by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, p.1650

NA'AT:

In the realm of Islamic literature, Na'at is the sacred devotional genre, composed with reverential sentiments being expressed for Muhammad ﷺ the Messenger of Allah (الله سبحانه وتعالى).

Renowned religious scholar Maulana Sayed Abdul Quddus Hashmi has defined the usage of the term Na'at in Urdu, as follows:

“In Urdu, particularly, the term “Na'at” is generally applied to a poetic-composition eulogising the personality of the Prophet (Muhammad) ﷺ in all its virtues and graces in verse (hardly ever in prose) and expressing the poet's heartfelt love and devotion, to his ﷺ exalted personality”.⁴

PROPHIEM:

It seems appropriate to mention here that another scholar from Bharat i.e., Khan Hasnain Aaqib has coined a word “Prophiem” as an alternative word/term for “Na'at” for English use. “Prophiem” as Aaqib claims, is an intermingling of two words, mainly Prophet and Poem for

⁴ Eulogies on Holy Prophet Muhammad, Translated by Mehdi Ali Siddiqi, P/XIII

such poetic expression. (Received from hasnainaaqib1@gmail.com on 29 November, 2018).

But we will use the known term “Na’at” in our writings till the time the term “Prophiem” is made a tradition and comes in vogue in writings of scholars and poets of this sublime genre of Na’at.

RELIGIOSITY OF LITERATURE:

Here the author is concerned with the religiosity of literature because of his belief in primacy of the supernatural over the natural life. T.S.Eliot has very aptly affirmed his belief in the words:

“the primacy of the supernatural over the natural life:
of something which I assume to be our primary
concern”.⁵

NATURE OF NA’ATIA POETRY:

The significance of Na’atia poetry can be highlighted by differentiating the two types of literature i.e. literature of knowledge and literature of power. According to the comprehension of Thomas De Quincey

⁵ Selected Prose, p42

“the function of the first [literature of knowledge] is to teach and the function of the second [literature of power] is to move”.⁶

The function of general poetry is simply to move and not to educate. While Na’atia poetry is comprised of knowledge and power to move. It not only moves the reader but also educates by its content. Educates due to its truthful and fact carrying text and moves for its creative strength, aesthetical expression and attractive style.

⁶ The Meaning of Literature, Thomas De Quincey

REFERENCES:

1. Wikipedia on Poetry.
2. The-Qur'an 67:1 (Translation: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Good word Books).
3. The Qur'an translated by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan P.`1650.
4. Shafiq Barelvi, Eulogies on Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
Translated by Mehdi Ali Siddiqi, Royal Book Company, Karachi,
First Edition 1987, Page XIII,
5. T.S. Eliot, Selected Prose, Penguin Books, p.42.
6. (The Meaning of Literature, Thomas De Quincey), Assays of
Yesterday and today, compiled by Dr. Imdad Hussain, Caxton
Book House, Lahore, Second Edition 1957) Page 38.

EXCELLENCE:

Keeping in view the background of the title of this work, it seems appropriate to introduce the norms, nature and excellence of general poetry that are universally accepted and applied by well renowned poets in their creative works world over.

EXCELLENCE IN LEXICON TERM:

Excellence: (ekselens) n., superiority; outstanding goodness, skill, etc.; great merit.¹

Par excellence: [paar ekselons] adj., to a supreme degree, as the best or most typical of its kind.²

Seneca has aptly perceived the sense of Excellence when says:

“It is quality rather than quantity that matters”.³

Sir Joshua Reynolds says:

¹ The Penguin English Dictionary

² Penguin E.Dictionary

³ A Dictionary of Wisdom

“Excellence is never granted to man, but as the reward of labour”.⁴

The excellence in the realm of poetry is, therefore, meant the skill required for doing poetry with full sense of the requirements of creative work i.e., [a] format, [b]content and [c]beauty of expression.

All poetic exercise is done in conformity with the laid down aesthetics of good poetic diction.

Al-Ghazali (1996) states that Islamic criteria of judgment about excellence in art and literature is that the works of an artist should be compatible with the ultimate moral and spiritual aims of human existence.⁵

GENERAL POETRY:

Poetic skill is instinctively bestowed by nature to some extra ordinarily sensitive people in the world. Poetry is like mother of imagination and to imagine is a nature of human being.

It is, therefore, deemed appropriate first to discuss some characteristics of general poetry.

⁴ A Dictionary of Wisdom

⁵ cited in Saleem Ullah Jundran 2007, P.43

General poetry is composed by poets on the basis of imagination, emotions feelings of remorse, happiness or in remembrance of past events of love. Since the purpose of creation of such poetry lies on the task of seeking and arousing feelings of pleasure or empathy through it, this poetry needs not reflect facts or realities of life to project or express truth in its actual form (the task of expression of realities is assigned to literature of knowledge and not literature of power). The poetry is burnished with lyrical elegance in well ornate forms. Apart from the purpose of creation of such poetry, general poetry requires beautification in expression to attract attention of audience. Pure and unique fantasy is the basic need of general poetry.

The definition of general poetry may also be benefited for understanding the concept of creating the same; hence the comprehensive definition found in the Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms is depicted below:

“Poetry Language sung, chanted, spoken, or written according to some pattern of recurrence that emphasizes the relationships between words on the basis of sound as well as sense: this pattern is almost always a rhythm or metre, which may be supplemented by rhyme or alliteration or both. The demands of verbal patterning usually make poetry a

more condensed medium than prose or every speech, often involving variations in syntax, the use of special words and phrases (poetic diction) peculiar to poets, and a more frequent and more elaborate use of figures of speech, principally metaphor and simile. All cultures have their poetry, using it for various purposes from sacred ritual to obscene insult, but it is generally employed in those utterances and writings that call for heightened intensity of emotions, dignity of expression, or subtlety of meditation. Poetry is valued for combining pleasures of sound with freshness of ideas, whether these be solemn or comical. Some critics make an evaluative distinction between poetry, which is elevated or inspired, and verse, which is merely clever or mechanical. The three major categories of poetry are narrative, dramatic, and lyric, the last being the most extensive”.⁶

Sorry for presenting the extensive excerpt from Dictionary of Terms. This is however prime need to understand the concept of poetry.

⁶ Charis Baldick, Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, Oxford University Press

It is not out of place to also mention some sayings of poets and critics in this regard for further elaboration of concept of poetry.

CONCEPTS OF POETS AND CRITICS REGARDING POETRY:

a. “Painting was called silent poetry and poetry speaking painting”.⁷

b. “Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds”.⁸

c. Plato (BC 427-BC 347) says:

Poetry comes nearer to vital truth than history.⁹

Apart from the ideas reflecting definition of poetry, various critics have also laid down some advisory norms for poets to endeavour for achieving target of good poetic composition. A few of such pieces of advice are mentioned here:

⁷ Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

⁸ (Percy Bysshe Shelley)(A Dictionary of Wisdom)

⁹ A Dictionary of Wisdom

CRITICS' VIEW FOR ATTAINING EXCELLENCE IN GENERAL POETRY:

Ezra Pound advises poets in following manner:

“Use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something. Don't use such an expression as dim land of peace.' It dulls the image. It mixes an abstraction with the concrete”.¹⁰

“The poet's mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together”.¹¹

This narrative of Eliot focuses over the poetic passions in order to compose poetry with proper sense of very well conceiving the thought content and aptness of expression, taking into consideration requirements of forms and beauty of expression.

POETS AS INTERPRETER OF SYMBOLS:

Allama Iqbal has already defined the task of a poet in his diary i.e., Stray Reflections, by saying:

¹⁰ Modern Poets on Modern Poetry, P.32

¹¹ T.S.Eliot, Selected Prose, P27

“The world spirit conceals the various phases of her inner life in symbols. The universe is nothing but a great symbol. But she never takes the trouble to interpret these symbols for us. It is the duty of the poet to interpret these symbols for us. It is the duty of the poet to interpret them and to reveal their meaning to humanity”.¹²

It means the poet has been assigned the duty to interpret the symbolic signs of inner life of the spirit. He speaks in a language that reveals colours of feelings and emotions.

SYMBOLISATION OF POETIC WORK:

To apprehend the idea of symbolisation of poetry it seems appropriate to refer to the definition of the same done by Abdul Rahman Jami, he wrote:

شعر چہود؟ نوائی مرغِ خرد
 شعر چہود؟ مثالِ ملکِ ابد
 می شود قدرِ مرغِ از او روشن
 کہ بہ گلخنِ درست یا گلشن
 می سراید ز گلشنِ ملکوت
 می کشد زان حریمِ قوت و قوت

What is poetry? The song of the bird of the intellect.

¹² Stray Reflections

What is poetry? The similitude of the world of eternity.
The value of the bird becomes evident through it.
And one discovers whether it comes from the oven of a
bath house or a rose garden.
It composes poetry from the Divine rose garden;
It draws its power and sustenance from that sacred
precinct.¹³

Hossein Nasr very rightly says:

“Poetry, whether explicitly didactic or otherwise,
bears an intellectual and spiritual message”.¹⁴

¹³ Islamic Art and Spirituality

¹⁴ Islamic Art and Spirituality

REFERENCES:

1. Penguin English Dictionary.
2. Ibid
3. Amjad Ali Bhatti, Dr., A Dictionary of Wisdom, National Book Foundation, Islamabad, 2015, Page 427.
4. Ibid.
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6. Charis Baldick, Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, Oxford University Press
7. A Dictionary of Wisdom.
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9. Ibid.
10. James Scully, Modern Poets on Modern Poetry, Fontana/Collns, Fifth Impression 1973, P.32.
11. John Hayward (edited by), T.S.Eliot, Selected Prose, Penguin Books,Hunt, Barnard & Co., Ltd.,1955, P27).
12. Muhammad Iqbal, Stray Reflections, The private note book of Muhammad Ibqal, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 2012, Page 95.
13. Hossein Nasr, Seyyed, Islamic Art and Spirituality, Oxford University Press, New Dehli, 1990, P.91
14. Ibid. P.91

NA'ATIA POETRY
(Most Sublime and Devotional in Nature)

Meer Taqi Meer the well renowned and famous poet of all times of Urdu advises to breath gently in the world which is very fragile. Here we are concerned with the devotional poetry which is more and more fragile than Meer's world. However to begin with the deliberations, let me quote his couplet to arouse a sense of responsibility among the poets involved in creation of Na'at. Meer renders:

لے سانس بھی آہستہ کہ نازک ہے بہت کام
آفاق کی اس کارگاہ شیشہ گری کا

The job is delicate, so gently breathe;
Here in this crystal workshop of the world.¹

Contrary to the general poetry, the Na'atia poetry needs to be based on facts and realities and not mere imagination, emotions, fantasies or feelings. It doesn't mean that such poetry does not require being ornate, embellished, or need not be good by elegant expressions.

¹ Art in Urdu Poetry, P.14

But the first preference is given to purity and exactness of text in Na'atia poetry. No arbitrary opinions can be related to the highest holy life of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) at the time of composing such poetry.

The poets engaged in composing Na'at are desirous of creating a sublime atmosphere for their society. Therefore, no any other form of poetry requires poetic justice than the poetry composed in praise of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It is because of the reason that all types of virtues are to be reflected in such poetry.

POETRY AND RELIGION:

Since religion arouses inner emotional feelings of mankind and poetry, impliedly propagates the same purpose, Na'atia poetry should be composed to arouse dormant feelings of the soul of mankind to pave the way for translating spiritual sentiments of love into actions of individual audience or society. Love is the prime mover for practical life of mankind and human values are weighed first in the milieu of love in the society.

This task of arousing inner sentiments of loving human value needs to be based on standards of loving to

the greatest and highest example of practical model of mankind.

It has also been observed through the literary history of the world, that most of the poetry is basically composed out of religious sentiments. Hence, it can easily be understood that the very poetic vision is based on religion.

It won't be out of place to quote here, the opinion of Dr. Javid Iqbal (s/o Allamah Muhammad Iqbal) regarding religions basis of poetic vision:

“Poetry cannot long remain separated from religious consciousness if it is to achieve a higher level of expression.Religion is a power as ancient as the world, and if philosophy, the parent of the sciences, has been universally acknowledged as the child of religion, there is no reason why poetry, which in its higher form, is more philosophical than philosophy itself, should not be considered as the child of religion”.²

² Essays of Dr. Javid Iqbal, P.4

REFERENCES:

1. Shahabuddin Rahmatullah, Art in Urdu Poetry, The Pakistan Co-operative Book Society Ltd., Dacca, 1954, Page 14.
2. Dr. Javid Iqbal, Essays of Dr. Javid Iqbal, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 2012, P.4

LOVE FOR THE PROPHET ﷺ IS THE ESSENTIAL SPIRIT FOR NA'AT

Under this literary scenario, love for the Prophet ﷺ i.e., hidden current of spirit, becomes main key for genuine expression of sentiments of praise for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in Na'atia poetry.

NATURAL SYSTEM OF SPREADING LOVE:

So far as love is concerned, it is spread for an individual through the hidden laws of nature by Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) in response to deeper faith and purely righteous actions by him/her, as stated in the following verse of Quran:

“Verily, those who believe [in Oneness of Allah and in His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) and work deeds of righteousness, the Most Gracious (Allah سبحانه تعالیٰ) will bestow love for them (in the hearts of the believers)”.¹

¹ Surah Maryam, Verse 96) (Translated by Dr. M.M.Khan

Quranic version looks further elaborated by a tradition reported by Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه). He (رضي الله عنه) narrates that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Said:

“When Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) loves any of His bondsmen, He (عليه السلام) said to Hadrat Jibrail (عليه السلام): Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) loves so-and-so man, so you should love him as well. Hadrat Jibrail (عليه السلام), thereupon, loves him and then Hadrat Jibrail (عليه السلام) announces: Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) loves so-and-so; so you may love him as well. Then, the heaven-dwellers also start loving him; therefore, his acceptance is inspired in the hearts of the people of the earth”.²

This general phenomenon of love is multiplied thousands and thousands times in case of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). For, even an ordinary Muslim can become beloved one of Al-Mighty Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى), by following way of life of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), Verse 31 of Surah 3, speaks as follows:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

“Say (O Muhammad (ﷺ), to mankind): “If you (really) love Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى), then follow me (i.e. accept

² Sahih Bukhari 5/6040, p.55

Islamic Monotheism, follow the Qur'an and the Sunnah), Allah (سبحانه تعالی) will love you".³

In presence of this shining verse of Qur'an, there is no need to emphasise any significance of deep love of an individual to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), without obedience of him (ﷺ).

Hence, all Muslims in general and Poets in particular, are bound to translate their utterances regarding love of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) into practical language.

An ordinary man of Ummah when follows deeds of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) becomes beloved of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالی). Then the highest position of the Prophet (ﷺ) being the most beloved of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالی) cannot be conceived or perceived at all. Poetic renderings are all done according to the proclamation of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالی) for His (سبحانه تعالی) beloved worshipper and Prophet (ﷺ):

“And We have exalted for thee thy name (remembrance)”.⁴

³ Translation: M.M.Khan

⁴ Al-Inshirah, 94:4) (Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar

TEXTUAL NATURE OF NA'ATIA POETRY:

This poetry is usually based on:

1. Facts of personal beauty of Muhammad (ﷺ).
2. Portrayal of his (ﷺ) teachings that are based on sacred words of Qur'an or traditions in pure spirit of the words uttered by him (ﷺ).
3. To portray examples regarding saying, deeds and affairs of Muhammad (ﷺ)
4. To report his (ﷺ) silent consent for any act performed by any of his (ﷺ) companions before him (ﷺ) (It is included into affairs).

This whole narrative is penned down for spreading fragrance of flowers of love for the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), being supreme personality of practical model in the world's history, besides showing enthusiasm to lead life according to the example set by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for the Muslim Ummah in particular and the whole mankind in general.

CONDITIONS OF EXCELLENCE FOR NA'ATIA

POETRY:

The condition of excellence in Na'atia poetry does not fall under the conditions that relate to general poetry. The text of Na'atia poetry is examined or judged in the light of facts derived from the Qur'an and traditions authentically reported by the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and scholars of traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The meaning derived from the traditions should not differ from the facts that are loudly spoken by the Qur'an. The detailed account of conditions of excellence for Na'atia poetry will be brought into discussion later on.

CLASIFICATION OF ISLAMIC DEVOTIONAL

POETRY:

The devotional poetry is of three kinds i.e., HAMD, NA'AT, and MANQABAT.

1. Hamd is always written in praise of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ),
2. Na'at in praise and laudation of Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and
3. Manqabat in praise of companions, family members, wives, nears and dears of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ),

besides sages, Sufis and renowned personalities of the Muslim Ummah.

Here, we are concerned with the devotional poetry presented in praise of Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), known as NA'AT in Urdu. Though praiseworthy sentiments can also be reflected in prose, yet the poetic form is generally accepted and termed 'NA'AT' in Urdu as has already cited herein above.

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1. The Noble Qur'an 19:96, Translated by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Darussalam.
2. Sahih Bukhari 5/6040, translated by: Prof. Muhammad Irfan Qadri, Farid Book Stall, Urdu Bazar, Lazore, 2013, P.55.
3. The Noble Qur'an 3:31 Translation: Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan.
4. The Holy Qur'an 94:4, Translation: Al-Haj Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar, National Book Foundation, 1973.

PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSING GENERAL POETRY

The principles of composing mere [general] poetry can be summarised as follows:

1. Correct usage of Language
2. Spontaneity
3. Emotions
4. High feelings
5. Aesthetic expression
6. Accepted standards of prosody that are followed in metrical poetry
7. Rhythm, sound of words in appropriate composing
8. Originality of thought, expressed as far as possible, or
9. Expression of borrowed thought content in a better style and in unique way of writing poetry i.e., textual relativity/Inter textually in a better aesthetic order.
10. Beautifying couplets by using simile, metaphor, allusions, personification, apostrophe, hyperbole, extravagance, metonymy, synecdoche, oxymoron, antithesis, onomatopoeia, epigram, irony, pun, alliteration, transferred epithet etc.

11. Avoiding ambiguity and hard or ugly sounding words in poetry so on
12. Rhymed, free and blank verses are to be written in their required styles and manners.
13. Atmosphere of high fantasies is to be created applying imagination.

NORMS NEEDED TO COMPOSE NA'ATIA POETRY:

So far as the Na'atia poetry is concerned, here thought content or text requires extreme care in composing words in couplets of laudation for the Holy Prophet ((ﷺ)). For, this poetry must be based on an object i.e. “for life’s sake”. Purposeless poetry composed as “Art for Art sake” is not acceptable in the realm of Na’atia Poetry.

Hence, poets involved in Na’atia poetry must follow the contextual norms fixed by divine revelation and traditions of the Holy Prophet ((ﷺ)) along with applying splendid techniques of exalted and glorified poetry for the sake of aestheticism. Every possible human effort must be made to select the most suitable and the most befitting words to express the attributes and characteristics of the Holy Prophet’s ((ﷺ)) personality. Surely, it is admitted that our tongue and words are itself unable to completely

glorify the great and exalted qualities of the most beloved Prophet (ﷺ) of Allah Almighty (سبحانه تعالیٰ). Because, the Qur'an and Hadith itself have chosen Divine words to glorify the attributes of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). This Divine description is source of illumination and thought depiction for all Na'at writers for all times to come.

It should be tried utmost that praiseworthy words are presented most respectfully to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) who encouraged speaking truth and discouraged lies. History depicts the event when his opponents also testified his (ﷺ) truthfulness.

Ibn-e- Abbas (رضی اللہ عنہ) narrates that when the verse No. 214 of Ash-Shu'ara [The Poets] “And warn your tribe [O Muhammad (ﷺ)] of near kindred”, was revealed, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) went out, and when he had ascended As-Safa mountain, he (ﷺ) uttered loudly:

“Ya Sabahah!” the people said “Who is that?” Then they gathered around him (ﷺ), whereupon he (ﷺ) said:

“Do you see? If I inform you that cavalrymen are proceeding up the side of this mountain, will you believe me?”

They said, “We have never heard you telling lie.”

Then he (ﷺ) said,

“I am a plain Warner to you of a coming severe punishment”.¹

It is evident that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was testified by even those people who later on became his enemies.

The same witness was given by Abu Sufyan in the court of Caesar of Rome when he was asked by the king:

“Had he (Muhammad (ﷺ)) ever been blamed for telling the lies before claiming his prophet-hood?”

Abu Sufyan replied:

“Not at all”.²

This character of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) requires that bare truth be uttered and not a single word be added with the facts, by the poets or narrators of any saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) or narrating any event connected to the sacred life of the Prophet (ﷺ)

¹ M.M.Khan’s translation p.674

² Pir Muhammad Karam Shah Al-Azhari, Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol.2, p.123.

THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD ﷺ IS COMPREHENSIVE, PERFECT AND UNIVERSAL ETERNAL MODEL:

Na'at composing effort requires sound knowledge about the life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Syed Sulaiman Nadvi writes:

“Prophet-hood has ended with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. His life history has been miraculously preserved to its smallest details for anyone who chooses to follow the divine guidance and apply it in everyday life”.³

THE NA'AT WRITING IS A TWO FOLDED TASK:

Na'at writing is though a creative activity yet it requires knowledge to reflect in allusions. Truthful utterance is also mandatory. Because glimpses of the life of Muhammad ﷺ are delineated here.

Allama Syed Sulaiman Nadvi has provided a detailed list of title of exalted personality and conduct of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: in Khutbat-e-Madras as under:

“The holy Prophet's personal appearance; His hair ;
His comb ; The number of gray hairs ;His hair-dye

³ Muhammad ﷺ, “Translation Khutbat-e-Madras”, p.21

;His use of an eye cleansing substance ;His clothes ;His daily life ;His socks ;His shoes ;His ring; His sword ;His armour ;His helmet ;His headdress; His trousers ;His manner of walking ;How he shielded his face with a piece of cloth ;His manner of sitting ;His bed and pillow; How he leaned back on his pillow ;His food ;His bread ;The meat and soup that he ate; His manner of washing for prayers ;The prayers he said before and after eating something ;The bowl he used ;The kinds of fruit he ate ;What he drank ;How he drank ;His use of perfume; His manner of talking ;The way he recited poetry ;His way of telling stories at bedtime ;His manner of sleeping ;His manner of worship ;The way he smiled; His sense of humour ;His prayers in the early morning; His performance of optional prayers at home; His fasting ;His recitation of the holy Quran ;His weeping and crying ;His bed ;His modesty ;His kind manners ;His hair-cut ;His names;His life style ;His age ;His death ;What he left behind after his death;the Seal of Prophethood; speaking and smiling; his clothes; his ring; his liking for decent clothes; his favourite colours; his dislike of certain colours; his use of perfume; his good taste; his love of riding.

Under his daily routine the subtitles include everything he usually did from morning to sunset:

His manner of sleeping; his long hours of worship during the night; his manner of praying; his usual sermons; his routine during travelling and during a holy war; his visits to the sick and the suffering to offer his sympathy and condolences; his visiting with others and his general routine.

Under the title of his assembly with his companions these subtitles are included:

His court; his public meetings for the purpose of preaching Allah's Message; the etiquette observed in those meetings; the usual time of those meetings; separate meetings for women; his way of preaching; the relaxed atmosphere of those meetings; the beneficial effect of his company; his manner of speech; the nature and wholesome influence of his talks.

The detailed account of his manner of worship is given under the sub-headings:

His supplication and performance of prayers; fasting; alms-giving; his pilgrimage to Makkah (the Hajj); his remembrance of Allah at all times; his remembrance of Allah during fighting; his fear of Allah; his grief and weeping; his love of Allah; his faith in Allah; his fortitude and his thanks-giving".⁴

⁴ Khutbat-e-Madras, Translated by Syed Riazul Hassan, P.56

The knowledge provided in the preceding paragraph borrowing from Syed Sulaiman Nadvi is not comprehensive one but contains some glimpses only. This may help infusing the spirit of seeking light and guidance from the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for all those involved in composing Na'atia poetry.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has shown us:

“How to talk; how to walk; how to greet; how to treat; how to learn; How to earn; how to live; how to give; how to try; how to die”.⁵

⁵ Saleem Ullah Jundran (2000)

REFERENCES:

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2. Pir Muhammad Karam Shah Al-Azhari, Zia-Un-Nabi, Translated by Muhammad Qayyum Awan, Zia-UI-Quran Publications, Laore, Vol.2, p.123.
3. Syed Suleiman Nadvi, Muhammad ﷺ Khutbat-e-Madras, Translated by Syed Riazul Hassan, P.21 (<http://ahlesunnahlibrary.com/http://nmusba.wordpress.com/>)
4. Ibid. P.56.
5. Source of Light; Religious Rhymes (Hamd, Na'at, Manqabut, & Prayer Pot-pourri) Master Muhammad Hussain Publications, Bhoa Hassan, Mandi Bahauddin, Pubjab, Pakistan).

**QUR'ANIC TEACHINGS PERTAINING TO POETRY:
Na'at Context in Particular.**

1. Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) does not like those poets who wander aimlessly in every valley and do not practice what they (seldom preach for virtues) in their poetry. The Divine order for poets is:

“As for the poets, the erring ones follow them[224].
See you not that they speak about every subject
(praising people...right or wrong) in their poetry?
[225]And that they say what they do not do [226]”.¹

Allama Sayed Sulaiman Nadvi had tried to shed light on the globally tested poetic works and observed:

“This world of ours has produced numerous great poets too. But these rulers of the world of fancy have utterly failed in the practical world of reality.... They have only supplied a momentary gratification of certain human emotions and created a fanciful world of unreal pains and pleasures. They have failed to leave a healthy impact on human life because their sweet and fancy words are not backed by actual deeds”.

¹ M.M.Khan.(26، الشرح)

Then referring to the above cited Qur’anic verses, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi says:

“The Divine verses have exposed the emptiness of their [poets] sweet words and have explained why they fail to leave any deep impression on life”.²

THE REALITY/THRUTH SUPPORTING POETRY IS ALLOWED IN ISLAM:

Contrary to condemnation of aimless poetry, Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) allows poetry for those poets who after accepting and practicing religious duties, create couplets according to the standards fixed for expressing truth. The Qur’an says:

“Except those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah...Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, and remember Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) much and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged [by replying back in poetry to the unjust poetry (which the pagan poets utter against the Muslims)]”.³

² Muhammad ﷺ Translation “Khutbat-e-Madras”, Translator: Syed Riazul Hassan, page 12

³ The Poets 26, verse 227).(Translation: M.M.Khan, P.675)

DIVINE CONDITIONS FOR RIGHTEOUS POETS FOR PEOTIC RENDERINGS:

The basic divine conditions for composing devotional/Na'atia poetry are:

[a] Belief in Oneness of Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ)

[b] Practicing righteous deeds

[c] Remembrance of Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) in poetry i.e. each and every word is used taking into consideration its appropriateness in the light of right of speech given by the religion.

DIVINE ORDER FOR ATTENDING OR ADDRESSING THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ:

Much more care is to be practised for praising the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. For, there are certain standards fixed by Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) for utterance of words - For example, Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) advises the followers of His (سبحانه تعالیٰ) Prophet ﷺ to observe Divine principles for seeking attention of the Prophet ﷺ. Such as:

1. O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet ﷺ nor speak aloud to him ﷺ in talk as you speak aloud to one another, lest

your deeds should be rendered fruitless while you perceive not.⁴

2. Verily, those who lower their voices in the presence of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), they are the ones whose hearts Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) has tested for piety. For them are forgiveness and a great reward.⁵

3. Verily, those who call you (ﷺ) from behind the dwellings, most of them have no sense.⁶

4. And if they had had patience till you (ﷺ) could come out to them, it would have been better for them.⁷

PROHIBITION OF USAGE OF RA'NA:

In the most majestic court of Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ), there is strict prohibition for usage of a word reflecting dual meanings, one positive and another negative or which can be used in negative sense by changing accent. Qur'an says:

“Believers, do not say to the Prophet (ﷺ) Ra'ina but say, Unzurna and listen to him (ﷺ) with attention”.⁸

⁴ Al-Hujurat 49, Verse2) (Translation: Dr.M.M.Khan

⁵ Al-Hujurat 49, Verse3) (Translation: Dr.M.M.Khan

⁶ Al-Hujurat 49, Verse4) (Translation: Dr.M.M.Khan

⁷ Al-Hujurat 49, Verse5)⁷. (Translation: Dr.M.M.Khan

⁸ (2:104). (Translated by W.Khan)

Instead of using the most respectful and most requestful unambiguous Arabic word “Unzurna” for ‘May we have your attention’, they [Jews] would say ‘rai’na’. ‘Ra’ina’, when pronounced properly, has much the same meaning as ‘unzurna’ but with the protraction of the second vowel, it becomes ‘raaina’, meaning ‘our shepherd’, and with the protraction of the first it becomes ‘raaina’, which means idiot.⁹

In order to frustrate the design of the Jews, the Holy Qur’an commands the Muslims to use the word “Unzurna” instead of Ra’ina, for the meanings of the two words are the same in Arabic.¹⁰

Hence after, it was divine order that usage of word Rai’na may become a pun in respect of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, because this or such a similar word which smells bad meaning, must be avoided in ordinary usage in poetry.

In the light of such a Divine guidance, no ordinary man or a poet can dare deliberately use words carrying dual meanings i.e., positive and negative.

⁹ W.Khan, p.38

¹⁰ Ma’Ariful Qur’an,P279

Poets are duty bound to select all words reflecting nicest meanings and they must try utmost to beautify the poetical lines with fair sounding words for presenting them to such personality who is superior to all mankind (ﷺ), who is above all human-beings in his esteem, grandeur and exaltation (ﷺ) and whose high position in the universe has Divinely been elaborated by the Qur'an through various aayat (verses).

A REFLECTION OF THE QUR'ANIC MANNER FOR ATTRIBUTION OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (ﷺ).

A few Qur'anic verses are delineated here to show the supreme dignity and the most exalted glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ):

“Indeed, God has conferred a great favour on the believers in sending a Messenger (ﷺ) from among themselves, to recite His (سبحانه تعالى) revelations to them, and purify them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, for, before that they were surely in manifest error”.¹¹

Sending Apostle to mankind has been termed a great favour, which is a sign of great significance. This is

¹¹ 3:164, Translated by Wahiddun Khan

also a sign of exaltation and grandeur of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

“O Prophet (Muhammad ﷺ)! Verily, We have sent you as witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner. And as one who invites to Allah (سبحانه تعالى) [Islamic Monotheism, i.e., to worship none but Allah (سبحانه تعالى) (Alone)] by His (سبحانه تعالى) Leave, and as a lamp spreading light (through your instructions from the Qur'an and the Sunnah...the legal ways of the Prophet (ﷺ)).¹²

“It is He (سبحانه تعالى) Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), to make it superior over all religions even though the mushrikun (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) hate [it]”¹³

“..And We have sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not but as a mercy for the Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)”¹⁴

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad ﷺ) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of men know not.”¹⁵

¹² (33:45-46, Translated by M.M.Khan)

¹³ (9:33, Translated by M.M.Khan)

¹⁴ (21:107, Translated by M.M.Khan)

¹⁵ (34:28, Translated by M.M.Khan)

“Blessed is He (سبحانهُ تعالى) Who sent down the Criterion (of right and wrong, i.e. this Qur’an) to His (سبحانهُ تعالى) slave (Muhammad ﷺ) that he may be a warner to the Alamin (mankind and jinn).¹⁶

“Muhammad (ﷺ) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) and the last (end) of the Prophets”.¹⁷

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ٥

Surely, Allah and His angels send blessings to the Prophet. O those who believe do pray Allah to bless him, and send your Salam (Prayer for his being in peace) to him in abundance.¹⁸

A sign of finality of the Prophet-hood is also cited in a verse of the Qur’an which loudly speaks of completion of religion. Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) says:

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion”.¹⁹

¹⁶ (25:1M.M.Khan)

¹⁷ (33:40, Translated by M.M.Khan)

¹⁸ (33:56 Ma’ariful Quran, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi, English Translation by Muhammad Shamim, Vol.7 Page 227

¹⁹ (5:3,M.M.Khan)

It means there is no room for any prophet up to the date of resurrection. The revelation process has been completed and therefore, the gate of Prophet-hood has also been closed for ever. The proclamation of completion of religion, also strengthened the highest position of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as he ﷺ possesses the final and complete version of God (الله سبحانه وتعالى) gifted religion, which does not need any change for all times to come. Whereas, Prophet-hood of all Prophets, who came to guide mankind, before Muhammad (ﷺ) were time and space bound. They all fulfilled the timely and thereby local requirements of religious life. Hence, the finality of revelation also signifies uniqueness of Muhammad ﷺ in the realm of the Prophet - hood.

Say O Muhammad ﷺ:

“O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth”.²⁰

The concept of broader dominion of the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (ﷺ) is also strengthening point of his high position amongst all Prophets who came from Adam (عليه السلام) to Hazrat Isa (عليه السلام).

²⁰ (7:158 Translated by M.M.Khan)

“We have given you abundance (i.e. the highest success of every kind.. kawthar here means khayr-e-kathir)”.²¹

“O mankind! Verily, there has come to you a convincing proof (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) from your Lord”.²²

Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) loves His Messenger (ﷺ) so much that He (سبحانه تعالیٰ) solemnly narrates to him (ﷺ), bad habits of the nation of Hazrat Loot (عليه السلام). He (سبحانه تعالیٰ) says:

“Verily, by your life (O Muhammad ﷺ) in their wild intoxication, they were wandering blindly”.²³

It is also apt to mention here that Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) warns of painful torment to those who annoy Muhammad (ﷺ). The Qur'an says:

“Those who annoy Allah's Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) will have a painful torment”.²⁴

Furthermore this warning has much been clarified by saying:

²¹ (108:1, Translated by Wahiddudin Khan)

²² (4:174 M.M.Khan)

²³ (15:72, Translated by M.M.Khan)

²⁴ (9:61 Translated by M.M.Khan)

“Verily, those who annoy Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) and His Messenger (ﷺ), Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) has cursed them in this world and in Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating torment”.²⁵

The secret of success in this and the world hereafter has also been laid down in following footsteps of Muhammad (ﷺ). Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) says:

“Those who believe in him (Muhammad ﷺ), honour him (ﷺ), help him (ﷺ), and follow the light (the Qur’an) which has been sent down with him (ﷺ), it is they who will be the successful”.²⁶

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) has also been bestowed permanent position for recommending pardon for his followers in case they approach him (ﷺ) for acceptance of their repentance. The Qur’an declares:

“When they had been unjust to themselves, had come to you (Muhammad ﷺ) and begged Allah’s forgiveness and the Messenger (ﷺ) had begged forgiveness for them, indeed, they would have found

²⁵ (33:57, Translated by M.M.Khan)

²⁶ (7:157. Translated by M.M.Khan)

Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) All-Forgiving (One Who forgives and accepts repentance), Most Merciful”.²⁷

The Messenger of Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) has been given full authority for providing justice in disputes among the matters of his (ﷺ) followers:

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad ﷺ) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission”.²⁸

The anxiety of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for seeking forgiveness from Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى), for his followers has also been highlighted by Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) Himself. Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) says:

“Verily, there has come to you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from amongst yourselves (i.e., whom you know well). It grieves him (ﷺ) that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He (Muhammad ﷺ) is anxious over you (to be rightly guided, to repent to Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى), and beg Him (سبحانهُ تعالى) to pardon and forgive your sins in order that you may enter paradise and be saved from the punishment

²⁷ (4:64)(M.M.Khan)

²⁸ (4:64-65) (Translated by M.M.Khan)²⁸

of the Hell-fire); for the believers he (ﷺ) is) full of pity, kind and merciful”.²⁹

Here two qualities have been attributed to the Messenger (ﷺ) of Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) i.e. Al-Ra’uf the compassionate and Al-Raheem the most merciful. Though, as a matter of fact, both the attributions are solely reserved for Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) Himself only. This attribution needs pondering upon as to what significance reflects in this Divine Order? This attribution clearly reflects upon the shadow of attributed names of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) to intimate mankind the closeness of The Messenger of Allah to his (ﷺ) Lord (سبحانه تعالیٰ).

According to tradition narrated by Abdullah ibn Mas’ud (رضی اللہ عنہ), the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said,

“People are falling into the fire like flies and I am trying to keep them away from it by holding on to their waists”.³⁰

²⁹ (9:128, Translated by M.M.Khan)

³⁰ (Musnad Ahmad)(The Qur’an Translation and Commentary by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, page 571)

Apart from these verses, manners of speech and poetic expression should also be observed within the frame work of teachings of Holy Qur'an i.e.

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ) and fear Him (سُبْحَانَهُ تَعَالَى), and speak (always) the truth”.³¹

This point of speaking truth must be observed in expressing praiseworthy words for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in addition to day to day life matters.

Beautification of physical things is also taught by Almighty Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ تَعَالَى) to His (سُبْحَانَهُ تَعَالَى) Messenger (عليه السلام), as is evident from verses 10-11 of Chapter Saba 34:

“And We made the iron soft for him (Dawud عليه السلام).” Saying: “Make you perfect coats of mail, and balance perfectly the rings of chain armour, and work you (men) righteousness”.³²

The above quoted verses of the Qur'an, guide to apply principles of excellence in the work of physical nature. While poetry is purely a subtle matter of expression, this needs more skill than any other work of physical

³¹ (33:70 Translated by M.M.Khan)

³² (Translated by M.M.KHAN)

nature. Hence, it requires more heed in order to keep high standard of poetic craftsmanship and usage of appropriate words containing fragrance of good meaning.

The Divine revelations cited herein above, automatically give an understanding that Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) loves His (سبحانه تعالیٰ) Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) and is desirous to see the mankind to obey His (سبحانه تعالیٰ) Messenger (ﷺ) completely. It is also emerged that the system of paying homage to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) has had been introduced in the heaven and the earth. In the heavens it is Salat (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy, etc.) and on the earth by commanding all believers to join in such greetings in Islamic way.

Since Na'at is sublime passion for praising Muhammad (ﷺ). It also falls under scope of meaning of Salat/Salutation. The worldwide earnest efforts for composing Na'at by poets of different nations in different languages, are apparent signs of Allah's (سبحانه تعالیٰ) proclamation:

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ

“And We have exalted for thee thy name
(Remembrance)”.³³

All these verses and many other narrated in to the Holy Qur'an are to be kept in mind at the time of composing laudatory poetry for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The text of Na'atia poetry must be composed in the light of revelations of these Qur'anic verses.

Maulana Noor-ud-Din Abdur Rahman Jami رحمه الله عليه says:

ہم قرآن در شان محمد ﷺ

The whole Quranic revelation is in praise of Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ)

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Hanafi Qadri wrote in response to a query about the guidance- source of Na'at writing art:

قرآن سے میں نے نعت گوئی سیکھی
یعنی رہے احکام شریعت موط

(Haddiq-e-Bakhshish)

Eng. I have learnt the art of literal terms: Na'at Goi
(Na'at writing/versification/composition/recitation) from

³³ (94:4, Translation by Al-Haj Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar, P369.)

the pages of the Holy Qur'an. So that sharia's instructions may remain in full-fledged practice and observance.³⁴

³⁴ (English translation by Dr. Saleem Ullah Jundran)

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POETRY'S PRACTICAL EXAMPLES LAID DOWN IN PRESENCE OF RASOOLULLAH (ﷺ):

A few traditions are depicted here in order to make clear the concept of permissible poetry:

THE SAYINGS OF THE HOLY PROPHET (ﷺ) ABOUT POETRY:

(1). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has said:

“in poetry there is wisdom”.¹

(2). The Rasoolullah (ﷺ) has said:

“They have perished who speak extravagantly.” He said it three times”.²

(3). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has said:

“The truest word spoken by a poet is that of Labeed,
“Behold everything besides Allah (سِوَا اللَّهِ) is vain”.³

¹ (Mishikat-ul-Masabeeh, Vol.4, p.395)

² (Mishkat Vol.4, P.395)

³ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.396)³.

(4). The Holy Prophet said to Hassaan bin Saabit at the siege of Quraizah:

“Satirise the polytheists, Gabriel is with you”. And the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to say to Hassaan bin Sabit (رضي الله عنه):

“Answer on my behalf. O Allah (سبحانه تعالى), strengthen him with the Holy Spirit (Gabriel عليه السلام)”.⁴

(5). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has said:

“Satirise the Quraish, it is more severe to them than the throwing of an arrow”.⁵

(6).The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has said:

“Hassaan has satirised them (the polytheists), and cured (the Muslims) and cured himself”.⁶

(7). Ka'b bin Maalik reported that he said to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). “Allah (سبحانه تعالى) has revealed concerning poetry what He has revealed.” (i.e., Verses of the Surah the poets 26:224, giving the impression of displeasure of Allah (سبحانه تعالى) regarding poetry).

⁴ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.397)

⁵ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.397)

⁶ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.397)

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“the believer strives with his sword and his tongue.
By Him (سبحانه تعالیٰ) in Whose Hand my soul is, you
shoot at them with it like shooting with arrows”.

According to Isti'ab by Ibne Abdul Barr. He (رضی اللہ عنہ) said :

“O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), what do you say about
poetry?” He (ﷺ) said, ‘the believer strives with his
sword and his tongue’.⁷

RASOOL-Ullah ﷺ PARTICIPATED IN CHANTING SLOGANS IN POETIC MEDIUM:

(8). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was taking out earth at
the battle of the Trench. During digging out the earth, he
(ﷺ) was saying:

“By Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ), were it not for Allah (تعالیٰ) we
would not have been guided,
Nor would have we given Sadaqah nor would have
we prayed,
So send down tranquillity upon us,
And make our steps firm if we happen to face the
enemy,
They have acted wrongfully towards us
When they intended to tempt us, we refused.”

⁷ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.399)

and raised his (ﷺ) voice when saying:

“we refused, we refused”.⁸

(9). Anas [رضي الله عنه] reported that when the emigrants and helpers were digging the trench and taking out the earth, they were saying:

“We are those who have sworn
allegiance to Muhammad (ﷺ)
to engage in Jihaad as long
as we are alive”.

And in response to them the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was saying:

“O Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), there is no life but that of the Hereafter. So forgive the helpers and the emigrants”.⁹

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) when said that “the believer strives with his sword and his tongue”. The believers got the point of permissible poetic renderings.

By giving assurance and practical permission of versification, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also clarified the concept of good and bad poetry.

⁸ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.398)

⁹ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.398)

For the purpose of providing practical example, the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ honoured Hazrat Hassan (رضى الله عنه) on rendering purposeful poetry by setting pulpit for him.

Hazrat Aa'isha (رضى الله عنها) reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to place a pulpit in the mosque for Hassaan (رضى الله عنه) who used to stand on it being blessed with the pride into the most majestic court of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Thereby Hazrat Hassan bin Sabit (رضى الله عنه) used to speak in his (رضى الله عنه) defence.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say:

“Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) strengthens Hassaan (رضى الله عنه) with the Holy Spirit as long as he speaks in defence of (or takes pride in) the Messenger of Allah ﷺ”.¹⁰

Contrary to that, when the Holy Prophet ﷺ heard some poetry or a couplet of poetry, composed for mere pleasure without any meaningful purpose or of lesser quality in terms of text (since mere poetry having no pious aim or object or having nothing but evil in it), he (ﷺ) strongly condemned it. As it is evident from the following tradition:

¹⁰ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.402)

Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has said:

“It is better for a man’s belly to be filled with pus which corrodes it than to be filled with poetry”.¹¹

The very much important teaching of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is to speak truth in affair of life. He (ﷺ) has particularly warned of false reporting on his (ﷺ) behalf. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) says:

“Do not assign a false statement to me because he, who lies about me, will enter Hell”.¹²

Another tradition is there containing advice for not assigning false statement to him (ﷺ):

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“He who assigns a false statement to me, should make his abode in Hell”.¹³

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“He who deliberately lies against me let him make his abode in Hell”.¹⁴

¹¹ (Mishkat Vol.4, P.398)

¹² (S.Bukhari, Vol.1. Page170, Tradition No.106)

¹³ (S.B.Vol.1, page170, tradition No.107)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Whoever ascribes anything to me what I have not said, should make his abode in Hell”.¹⁵

All these traditions must be kept in view by poets involved in eulogizing the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). These all traditions reiterate that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was himself the strongest ambassador and upholder of truth. Therefore, he (ﷺ) does not like at all the slightest kind of amalgamation of falsehood or lying statement into the truth from anyone at any place.

EXCELLENCE OF BEAUTY IN NA’AT THROUGH VERSIFICATION OF TRUTHFUL PROPHETIC CHARACTERSTICS (ﷺ):

Excellence of beauty of truthful matters can be seen in the poetic work done by various poets from amongst the companions (رضوان الله عليهم) of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

¹⁴ (S.B.Vol 1, P/170, tradition 108)

¹⁵ (S.B.Vol.1, P.170, Tradition109)

SOME SPECIMENS OF PROSE IN THE PRAISE OF THE HOLY PROPHET HAZRAT MUHAMMAD (ﷺ).

It is not out of place to mention here that poetic versification does not need any prosody or metre. It requires aesthetical expression and beautiful words only. It is, evident from various prose works that gained appreciation being poetic sensibility and subtlety of expressions.

Two such examples are mentioned here before heading towards poetical expressions.

Gospel of Barnabas depicts as follows:

“But after me shall come the splendour of all the prophets and holy ones, and shall shed light upon the darkness of all that the prophets have said because he (ﷺ) is the messenger of God”.

“For, I am not worthy to unloose the ties of the hosen or the latchets of the shoes of the messenger (ﷺ) of God whom ye call “messiah” who was made before me. And shall come after me. And shall bring the words of truth. So that his faith shall have no end.”

“I am indeed sent to the house of Israel as a prophet of salvation. But after me shall come the messiah sent of God to the entire world. For whom God hath made

the world and then through the entire world will God be worshipped. And mercy received”.

“But my consolation is in the coming of messenger, who shall destroy every false opinion of me, and his faith shall spread and shall take hold of the whole world, for so hath God promised to Abraham our father”.¹⁶

These are not only facts but provide beautified style of expression. These are worth borrowing for textual truthfulness for renderings into poetry for enlightening the minds of Na’at lovers. Such specimens will illumine more the candle of profound love for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) into the hearts of Na’at writers, Na’at reciters and Na’at literature developers.

AESTHETIC INTRODUCTION OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH (ﷺ) BY UMM-MA’BAD:

An excellent example of prosaic narrative of the event of arrival of Muhammad (ﷺ) at the tent of Umm-e-Ma’bad has also been saved in the history of migration from Makah to Medina. Though the narrative of Um-e-Ma’bad is based on truthful statement yet the beauty and fragrance of words is ever- lasting:

¹⁶ (Zia-Un-Nabi vol.1, P.364)

During migration journey, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with his companion Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) sought some food from Umm-e-Mabad and when she replied having nothing with her, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) miraculously touched the udder of a very weak goat and started milking. Vessels were filled by the old lady with milk and the miraculous act of the Prophet (ﷺ) was observed thereby.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) left the tent. The lady remained engaged in astonishing thoughts. Meanwhile her husband, Abu Ma'bad came and amazed to see the vessels filled with the milk and asked where this milk came from? Then she described in worth admiring elegant words the attributes of the Prophet (ﷺ). She narrated:

“I saw such a man (ﷺ) whose beauty was evident, whose make was pretty and whose face was silky. Neither the over whiteness of colour made him defective and nor the thinness of his neck and the head created defect in him. Very beautiful, the most charming. His (ﷺ) eyes were black and wide and his eye lashes were long. His (ﷺ) voice was echoing. Black eyes, antimony filled. Both the brows thin and joined. The neck was shining. The beard was dense. When quiet, he (ﷺ) deemed prestigious, and

when talked, his face was lustre and smiling. The sweet speech; his talk was obvious, neither useless nor nonsense, the talk was as if the garland of pearls, from which the pearls were dropping. From distance, he seemed dignified and beautiful and from near he seemed most sweet spoken and charming. His (ﷺ) height was medium; not so tall, the eyes felt bad, nor so short to be looked down upon. In between two branches, he was like the one which is taller and was the greenest than all. His (ﷺ) companions were such who had encircled. To all he (ﷺ) was master and by all he (ﷺ) was respected. Neither he was sourly nor was opposed his command”.¹⁷

This truthful statement of Umm-e-Ma’bad has been reported by various historians. This particular text has been translated from the Syrat Ibn-e-Kathir Vol.II.

There is no extravagance in this statement of Umm-e-Ma’bad. Only facts are reflected. Its beauty is ever-lasting because of the shining reality lying therein.

A well renowned poet Abdul Aziz Khalid illuminated his couplet with reference of narrative of Umm-e-Ma’bad by rendering:

¹⁷ (Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol.3, P53)

سنى امّ معبد سے تعريف تيرى
بہت تجھ سے ملنے کو جی چاہتا ہے

Having heard your marvellous introduction by
Umm-e-Ma'bad,

My heart is highly desirous to see you (رضی اللہ عنہ).

(Translated by the author: Aziz Ahsan)

HAZRAT UMAR'S (رضی اللہ عنہ) VISION OF POETRY:

Some critical and practical principles of poetry fixed under the reign of Hazrat Umar (رضی اللہ عنہ) are mentioned herein:

According to Dr. Ali Muhammad Muhammad As-Sallaabee,

“Umar (رضی اللہ عنہ) had the strongest attachment to poetry and would quote poetry the most often. In fact, the following was said about him:

“There was hardly any situation ‘Umar ibn-Al-Khattaab (رضی اللہ عنہ) was faced with regarding which he did not recite a relevant verse of poetry”.¹⁸

There are numerous examples of reflections of his (رضی اللہ عنہ) refined taste of poetry. He (رضی اللہ عنہ) has repeatedly

¹⁸ (The Biography of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (R.A) P.558/1)

been quoted, reciting such poetry for the sake of inspiring the Muslim poets to rise to the task of using their talents to defend Islam. Dr. Ali Muhammad Muhammad As-Sallaabee states that:

“He (رضى الله عنه) pronounced judgments on the quality of different poems and he corrected poetry that did not correctly follow the rules of rhyme and metre. In short, he (رضى الله عنه) is truly an eminent literary critic”.¹⁹

It is reported that Hazrat Umar (رضى الله عنه) encouraged learning poetry. History preserved words of his (رضى الله عنه) speech as follows:

“Learn poetry, for it contains beauty that should be sought out and evil that should be purified [and corrected]; it contains wisdom for the wise, and it points to the noblest of manners”.²⁰

Dr. Ali also mentioned that:

“As for poets, ‘Umar (رضى الله عنه) loved those among them whose hearts were filled with Faith and who then expressed their Faith and their appreciation of the wonderful teachings of Islam through poetry. The best of poets, then, were those who used their talents

¹⁹ (The Biography of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضى الله عنه, P- 558/1)

²⁰ (Biography of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضى الله عنه, P.560/1)

to inspire others to embrace the truth and to apply the teachings of Islam. And while ‘Umar (رضى الله عنه) appreciated the linguistic worth of the ancient, pre-Islamic poetry; he (رضى الله عنه) was stern with contemporary poets whose poetry ran contrary to the teachings of Islam”.²¹

The norms fixed by Hazrat Umar (رضى الله عنه) for poetry are summarised as under:

1. Poetry should be clear and direct.
2. Poetry should be easy to understand.
3. Poetry should be truthful and free from exaggeration.

Sincerity of the poet, novelty of expression and true utterance by poets were pre-requisite of poetry for Hazrat Umar (رضى الله عنه).

What a true picture of an eminent literary critic is transcribed in the following words by the biographer of Hazrat Umar (رضى الله عنه):

“The true poetic artist, in Umar’s view, was the one who expressed profoundly deep ideas in new and

²¹ (Biography of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضى الله عنه, P. 562/1)

fresh ways; those ideas, mind you, had to be in accordance with the teachings of Islam”.²²

It means Islamic poetry should be free from ambiguity, exaggeration and confusion.

²² (Biography of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضى الله عنه, P. 578/1)

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EULOGIZED POETIC RENDERINGS OF DIFFERENT ERAS, COUNTRIES AND LANGUAGES

I.Eulogized Arabic Poetry Selection (Arabic Na'at Selection):

Eulogized Poetry synthesized before the birth of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in Arabic and afterward in other languages such as Persian, Urdu and English cannot be thoroughly taken into account due constraints of time and space. Even glimpses of such poetry cannot be borne by this handy book edition. Citation of some poetic expressions of some poets and dignitaries of time is however presented hereunder:

KING OF YEMEN:

A king of Yemen of Sultanate Himyar named As'ad Abu Karab (385 - 420 AD) showed his love and affection for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in a beautiful manner. He wrote:

وَأَحْمَدُ إِسْمُهُ يَا كَيْتَ أَنِي
أَعْمَرُ وَلَعَدَ مَبْعُوثِ بَعَامِ

(ضياء اللّٰہی ﷺ، جلد اول ص 272)

“The holy name of the Prophet is Ahmad (ﷺ); would that my life favour, I may live only one year after he (ﷺ) is honoured by with the prophet-Hood”.¹

KING TUBBA:

Another king named Tubba was said to be a believer who after hearing the news of the Prophet (ﷺ)’s advent from religious scholars of his associates ascribed the following verses to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ):

شَهِدْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ بَارِئًا إِلَى عَمِّهِ
رَسُولٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ بَارِئًا إِلَى عَمِّهِ
وَلَوْ أَنَّ عَمْرِي إِذَا لَمْ يَأْتِ
لَكُنْتُ وَزِيرًا لَهُ وَإِنْ عَمَّ
وَجَا حَدَّثَ بِالسَّيْفِ أَعْدَاءَهُ
وَفَرَّجْتُ عَنْ صَدْرِهِ كُلَّ هَمٍّ

(فضاء النبي ﷺ، جلد سوم، ص 129)

"I witness (أشهاد) Ahmad (ﷺ) is the Prophet of God (سبحانه وتعالى), the Creator of all the souls. If my life remains faithful with me and I find the era of the Prophet (ﷺ), I would become his minister and would help him like the cousin helps, on the occasions; I shall fight against his (ﷺ) enemies and would waive off all the

¹ (Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol.1, page 214)

suspensions and worries out from the bosom of the Prophet”.²

NA’ATIA COUPLETS OF WARQAH BIN NAUFIL AL- QURESHI:

When Ummul Momineen Hazrat Khadijah (رضى الله عنها) introduced her surpassing all, peerless and prestigious husband Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) to Waraqah Bin Naufil Al-Qureshi, he foresighted the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (ﷺ). He also expressed his views in verses. Some of these verses are depicted below:

وَ إِنْ يَكُ حَقًّا يَا خَدِيجَةُ فَاعْلَمِي
 حَدِيكَ إِيَّا هَا فَأَحْمَدُ مَرْسَلُ
 وَجِبْرِيلَ يَأْتِيهِ وَ مِيكَالَ فَاعْلَمِي
 مَنْ اللَّهُ وَحَى يَشْرَحُ الصَّدْرَ مَنْزِلُ
 يَفُورُ هَمْزٌ مَنْ فَارَ فِيهَا تَوْبَةُ
 وَيَسْتَقِي هَمْزٌ الْعَالِي الْعَدِيرَ الْمَضَلُّ

(اليضام 344 جلد اول)

“If it is true be sure oh Khadijah, Ahmad (ﷺ) is the Prophet of God. Gabriel and Makaail descend to reveal the word of God to him (ﷺ) and know oh Khadijah!

² (Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol.3, P.76)

The bosom enlarges by this revelation.

He who repents and mends his ways, he succeeds,

and he who observes vanity and prejudice; he earns to him the bad luck”.³

SAWAAD BIN QAARIB VERSIFIES:

Acceptance of the Holy Prophet’s (ﷺ) instructions for any type of sacrifice was the permanent habit of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Their enthusiasm is reflected in the verse presented by Sawaad bin Qaarib:

فَمَرْنَا بِمَا يَا تَيْكَ مِنْ وَحْيٍ رَبِّنَا
وَلَا نَكَا نَ فِيمَا نَجَاءَتْ شَيْبُ الدَّوَاءِ

(جلداول ص 482)

“O the holy Prophet (ﷺ)! What God (الله سبحانه) revealed to you, enjoin us for we would happily act upon your command, no matter, we go white headed in obeying”.⁴

³ (Zia-un-Nabi, Vol.1, page 259)

⁴ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.1, P.345)

MENTION OF MUHAMMAD (ﷺ) THE PROPHET IN THE TORAH:

There are numerous citations mentioned in the revealed books for Muhammad (ﷺ). Atta bin Yasar met Abdullah bin Amr bin Aas and asked to tell qualities, merits and virtues of the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned in Torah. Then he recited the verses from Torah as under:

“O Prophet! We have sent you as a witness and giver of the glad tidings, a timely warner, the refuge of the Ummah; you are my slave and messenger, I named you Al-Mutwakkil; you are neither a harsh one nor are you hard hearted, nor a maker of noise in the bazaars. You do not reply evil with evil rather you forgive. God shall not call you back to Him until He shall make a delinquent Ummah the righteous one through you; they shall call: “there is no god but Allah”. God shall gift the sight to the blinds, for your sake, the hearing to the deaf and shall enlighten the hearts with light of guidance, wrapped in covers”.⁵

⁵ (Zia-Un-Nabir, Vol.1,P.354)

HAZRAT ABDUL MUTTALIB EXPRESSED SENTIMENTS FOR HIS GRAND SON MUHAMMAD

(ﷺ):

Abdul Muttalib heard the news of the birth of his grandson and rushed to Hazrat Aminah (رضى الله عنها) who narrated details of happenings of miracles at the occasion. Abdul Muttalib brought the most sacred gift (i.e. grandson) of Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) to Ka'bah for paying thanks to Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ). At that time he said some verses, extempore:

أَعْطَانِي	الَّذِي	لِلَّهِ	أَلْحَمْدُ
الْأَرْدَانِ	الْطَّيِّبِ	الْغُلَامِ	هَذَا
الْعِلْمَانِ	عَلَى	الْحَمْدِ	قَدْ سَاوَنِي
الْأَرْكَانِ	ذِي	بِالْبَيْتِ	أُعِيدُهُ
الْبُنْيَانِ	بَلَغَ	أَرَاهُ	حَتَّى
شَتَانِ	شَرِّ ذِي	مِنْ	أُعِيدُ
الْعِيَانِ	مُضْطَرِبِ	حَاسِدٍ	مِنْ

(غياث اللمنى للشيخ، جلد 2، ص 30)

“All the praise is due to Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) Who gifted me the sacred child. In his cradle, he is chief of all the children. I seek for him the refuge of Ka'bah, till I see him strong and stuffed, and to protect him from

the evil of each of his enemy and envious I hand over him to Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ)”.⁶

ABU LAHAB FREED HIS SLAVE GIRL ON RECEIVING THE NEWS OF BIRTH OF HAZRAT MUHAMMAD (ﷺ)

It is narrated that Abu Lahab, after hearing the news of the birth of Muhammad (ﷺ), freed his slave girl Thuwaybah and benefitted in Hell to quench his thirst every Monday for this act.

Hafiz Al-Sham Shams-ud-Din Muhammad bin Nasir versified the matter:

إِذَا كَانَ هَذَا كَافِرًا جَاءَ ذَمُّهُ
وَتَبَّتْ يَدَايَ فِي الْحَجِيمِ مُحَمَّدًا
أَتَى أَنَّهُ فِي يَوْمِ الْاِثْنَيْنِ ذَائِمًا
يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُ لِلشُّرُورِ بِأَحْمَدِ
وَمَا انْظُرُنْ بِأَعْيُنِ الذِّى كَانَ عَمْرُهُ
بِأَحْمَرَ مَسْرُورًا وَمَاتَ مَوْءًى جَدًّا

(الفيض جلد دوم 55)

"Look! An infidel, in whose scorn a full surah "Tabat Yada" was revealed. Who would remain in the Hell for ever, is rewarded for the celebration of the birth

⁶ (Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol.2, page 17)

of the Prophet (ﷺ), if every Monday his chastisement is lessened, then think about the status of such a believer, who celebrates the Meelad throughout his life and passes away reciting the Kalimah-e-Toheed".⁷

LULL OF HAZRAT SHAYMA FOR MUHAMMAD (ﷺ)

When the Prophet (ﷺ) remained with Hazrat Halimah, Shayma the daughter of Halimah used to lull him in lyrics:

يا ربنا ابق لنا محمدًا
حتى نراه يا فقا و امرؤا
ثم نراه سیدًا مسودًا
واکبت انا ديه معًا و الحسدًا
واعطه عرا يد و م اهدًا

(ضیاء النبی، ج 2، ص 70)

"O God! Preserve my brother Muhammad (ﷺ) for us so that we may see him (ﷺ) sturdy and young. Till he (ﷺ) becomes the head of his nation, and they all become obedient to him (ﷺ). Oh my God! Curse upon his (ﷺ) enemies and envious. And honour him (ﷺ) with apex glory that continues till infinity".⁸

⁷ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P.33)

⁸ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P.43)

So much heart felt, delicate, soft and sublime thought of Hazrat Halima's daughter about the most beautiful and sweetest brother (ﷺ).

Hazrat Aminah (رضى الله عنها) saw her beloved son (ﷺ), at the time of her death and expressed her sentiments in verses:

إِنَّ صَحَّ مَا أَبْصَرْتُ فِي الْمَنَامِ
 فَأَنْتَ مَبْعُوثٌ إِلَى الْأَنَامِ
 تُبْعَثُ فِي الْحِلِّ وَ فِي الْحَرَامِ
 تُبْعَثُ فِي التَّحْقِيقِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ
 دِينَ أَبِيكَ الْبَرِّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
 قَالَ اللَّهُ أَنَهَا كَ عَنِ الْأَعْنَامِ
 وَاللَّا تَوَالِيهَا مَعَ الْأَقْوَامِ
 كُلُّ حَىٍّ مِيتٌ وَ كُلُّ جَدِيدٍ بَالٍ
 وَ كُلُّ كَبِيرٍ يَفْنَى وَ أَنَا مَبْنِيَّةٌ
 وَ ذِكْرُكَ بَاقٍ وَ وَلَدْتُ طَهْرًا

(ضياء النبی، ج 2، ص جلد دوم 77)

“If what I saw in the dream was true, then you (ﷺ) shall be revealed as Prophet, in Halal and Haraam, you (ﷺ) will be everywhere as Prophet. You will be revealed on the religion of your father Abraham (عليه السلام). I say to you (ﷺ) for the sake of God, refrain from idols and not befriend the other nations”.

And then she added:

“Each, who live will taste the death, every new will become old and every big thing will perish. I am dying but my memory will remain till infinity, I delivered a sacred child (ﷺ).”⁹

What a beautiful, heart touching, original and sublime expression of admiration, and glorification on behalf of Hazrat Aminah (رضى الله عنها) for her beloved son, the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ)! While leaving this world, she (رضى الله عنها) left for all of us everlasting Na’at lines:

“I am dying but my memory will remain till infinity”.

EULOGY OF ABU TALIB:

After declaration of the Prophet-hood the people of Makkah became enemy of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Then, Hazrat Abu Talib reminded them blessings of the Prophet (ﷺ) and wrote an ode:

وَأَبْيَضُ يَسْتَقِي الْغَمَامُ بُوْجْهَمْ
شِمَالُ الْيَتَامَى وَ عَصْمَةٍ لِّلْأَرَامِلِ
يَلُوْزُ أَهْلَ الْهَلَاكِ مِنْ أَلِ هَاشِمٍ
فَصَمَّ عِنْدَهُ فِي نِعْمَةٍ وَ فَوَاضِلِ

⁹ (Zia-Un-Nab, vol.2, P.48)

“His (ﷺ) complexion is fair. For the sake of his (ﷺ) illustrious face, we beg the alms of rain. He (ﷺ) is the refuge of the orphans and guard to the honours of the widows. The poor from family of Hashim, avoiding death; seek refuge of his (ﷺ) grace, so such people are gifted with all the prizes and the kindness”.¹⁰

EVENT OF FIXATION OF BLACK STONE ADMIRER BY A POET OF THE ERA OF JAHILIYAH:

Truth has been expressed by a poet after witnessing the event of placement of black stone in Kabah by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This is the clear evidence of the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) wisdom and niceness of dispensing justice. This event relates to the period prior to declaring the prophet-hood. The poet Haibrah bin Wahn spontaneously uttered as follows:

تَشَا جَرَّتْ الْآيَاءُ فِي فَصْلٍ خَطِيءٍ
جَرَّتْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْخَسْ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَسْعَمِ
قَلَمًا رَكِينًا الْأَمَرَ قَدْ جَدَّ جَدُّهُ
وَلَمْ يَبْقَ شَيْءٌ غَيْرَ سَلَمِ الْمُهْتَدِ
رَضِينَا وَ قُلْنَا الْعَدْلَ أَوَّلَ طَالِعِ

¹⁰ (Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol.2, p.69)

مَجِيءٌ مِنْ الْبَطْءِ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَوْعِدٍ
 فَقَا جَانَا هَذَا الْأَمِينُ مُحَمَّدٌ
 فَقَلْنَا رَضِينَا بِالْأَمِينِ مُحَمَّدٌ
 يَحْيَى قُرَيْشٍ كُلَّهَا أَمْسَ شَيْبَةٍ
 وَفِي الْيَوْمِ مَعَ مَا يُحْدِثُ اللَّهُ فِي عَدَدٍ
 قَبَاً يَا مَرْلَمَ يَرَى النَّاسُ مِثْلَهُ
 أَعْمُ وَارْضَى فِي الْعَوَاقِبِ وَالْبَدَى
 وَكُلَّ رَضِينَا فَعَلَهُ وَصَنِيْعُهُ
 فَأَعْظَمَ مِنْ رَأَى هَادٍ وَهُتَدَى
 وَتِلْكَ يَدُ مِنْهُ عَلَيْنَا عَظِيمَةٍ
 يَرَوْحُهَا هَذَا الزَّمَانُ وَيَعْتَدَى

(ضياء النبي ﷺ، جلد 2، ص 155)

“To decide a matter, the tribes widely differed, such differences, which cursed them. When we saw the issue was fatal and there was no remedy but to draw our swords from the sheaths. We agreed upon the person as our judge, who would first enter Ka’bah the next morning. So, all of sudden, the Trustworthy, whose blessed name is Muhammad (ﷺ), came to view, to see whom, we all agreed on him (ﷺ).

He (ﷺ) is and will be the best, among the Quraysh, due to his (ﷺ) virtues and values. And God is to bless him (ﷺ) with His blessings and the graces which we are but unable to conjure. He solved the issue in such

manner, no precedent of which people have ever seen till the day. His (ﷺ) is the grace, open to all, of which beginning and the end both were rejoicing. We all agreed to his (ﷺ) glorious deed and the excellent action. Verily! What a glorious was the judgement of this Haadi and Mehdi (ﷺ). It is his (ﷺ) obligation unto us, which today and tomorrow, and will stand, obligatory upon us till the infinity”.¹¹

The precedence of the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) unprecedented and unparalleled wisdom and its presentation through poetical medium in the words of Na'at, both are excellent.

These citations of poetic renderings expose the high skill of poets involved in expressions to reveal truth. Hence it is incumbent upon later poets to keep in view the texts of truthful events for illumining their poetical world.

¹¹ Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, p.101

HAZRAT ZAID BIN HARITHAH REVEALS NOBILITY OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH (ﷺ):

When Hazrat Zaid bin Harithah heard that his father was continuously weeping in his son's memory, then, replied in these lines:

أَحْنُ إِلَى قَوْمِي وَ إِنْ كُنْتُ نَائِبًا
بَنَى قَطِيعِينَ الْبَيْتِ عِنْدَ الْمَشَاعِرِ
وَ إِنْ بِي بَحْمَدٍ لِلَّهِ فِي خَيْرٍ أَسْرَقَ
كَرَامَ مَعَدٍّ كَابِرًا بَعْدَ كَابِرٍ

(جلد دوم ص 158)

“In my heart I have desires for my tribe, although I am far off from my homeland. I am residing in such a house which is near mushair. By the grace of God, I am leading my life in such a noble family whose members are very kind and who are the heads of their people since generations”.¹²

PRAISING COMPANIONS (رضى الله عنهم) OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (ﷺ):

Writing verses in appreciation of companion (رضى الله عنه) of the prophet (ﷺ) also remained traditionally in vogue. For these characters became praiseworthy due to the

¹² (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P103)

blessing of enjoying company of illustrious and shining personality of the Prophet (ﷺ) and none other. Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit (رضى الله عنه) wrote in praise of Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضى الله عنه):

إِذَا تَذَكَّرْتَ شَجْوًا مِنْ أَخِي ثَنِيَّةً
فَا ذَكَرْ أَخَاكَ أَبَا بَكْرٍ بِمَا فَعَلَا
خَيْرَ الْبَرِيَّةِ اتَّقَاهَا وَافْضُلَهَا
بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّ وَأَوْفَاهَا بِمَا حَمَلَا
وَالثَّانِي التَّالِي الْمَحْمُودُ مَشْهُدُهُ
وَالْوَائِلُ النَّاشِ مِنْهُمْ صَدَقَ الرَّسُولُ

(ايضاً ص 229 جلد دوم)

“Whenever you need to remember the sorrows and the gloom of your brother, remember the miseries and the pains of Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضى الله عنه), he had to suffer. He (رضى الله عنه) is the best and the noblest among all the creatures after the Prophet (ﷺ). Whatever the responsibilities he took, he accomplished them faithfully, above all. He (رضى الله عنه) came after the Prophet (ﷺ). His evidence (Mash-had) was praiseworthy, he was among those who believed in the Prophet (ﷺ).”¹³

¹³ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P151)

Every person, every object, every place, every animal whosoever, whichever, whatsoever, found the blissful company and auspicious association of the Holy Prophet ﷺ became dignified, glorified and exalted due to his ﷺ favour and kindness.

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Brailvi submits in his world famous “Salam-e-Raza”

ان کے ہر نام و نسبت پہ نامی درود
 ان کے ہر وقت و حالت پہ لاکھوں سلام
 ان کے مولیٰ کے ان پر کروڑوں درود
 ان کے اصحاب و عترت پہ لاکھوں سلام

(Hadaiq-i-Bakhshish)

“The highest blessings may shower upon all the possessive and qualitative good names, associations and links of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Millions of salaam (salutations) be upon all time and all circumstances of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Trillions of blessings on behalf of Allah Almighty may shower upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Millions of salaam

(salutations) be also upon the companions and descendants of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Translation: Dr. S.U. Jundran)

The blessings of company of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) extended so much that Allah Almighty (سبحانه تعالیٰ) declared to accept faith exactly matching with the faith of the Companions (رضوان الله عليهم اجمعين) of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).
Qr'an says:

فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا

(137/البقرة)

“If they believe as you have believed, then are they rightly guided?”

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan writes in his commentary:

“When truth stands on its own, unsupported by history or tradition, as it was in the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), those who accept it [the companions of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)] do so for the pure and simple reason that it is the truth. This is the kind of belief that God recognizes and accepts. This is true faith; only faith of such strength and purity is acceptable to God”.¹⁴

¹⁴ (The Qur'an, Translation and Commentary by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, P.52)

NA'AT WRITTEN BY HAZRAT HASSAN BIN THABITؓ

Hazrat Hassaan bin Thabit (رضى الله عنه) eulogized his verses for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ):

أَعَزَّ عَلَيَّ لِلْبُتَّةِ خَاتَمٌ
مِنْ اللَّهِ مَشْهُودٌ يُلَوِّحُ وَيَشْهَدُ

“He (ﷺ) it is indeed,

who is the last;

of the Prophets (ﷺ) of Allah (سبحانه تعالى);

This is Allah’s (سبحانه تعالى) revelation,

Which shines like illumination”.

نَبِيٌّ أَتَانَا بَعْدَ بَاسٍ وَفَرَقَهُ
مِنْ الرُّسُلِ وَالْأَوَّامِنِ فِي الْأَرْضِ تُعْبَدُ

“He is a Prophet who has come.

To us after a long lapse of time;

Before him (ﷺ) on earth;

common was the practice,

Of idolatry”.

وَ أَكْذَرْنَا نَارًا وَبَشِّرَ بِهِ
وَعَلَّمَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَسْلَمَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ نَحْمَدُ

“He (ﷺ) chastised us with fire [frightened us against the fire of the hell];

He (ﷺ) it was who promised us paradise;

He (ﷺ) it was who taught us Islam;

He (ﷻ) it was for whom we thank Allah (ﷻ).

(Hazrat Hassan (رضى الله عنه) translated by Dr. Ghulam Ali Allana, Eulogies on Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)¹⁵

POETIC RENDERING OF HAZRAT HAMZA (رضى الله عنه)

Hazrat Hamza (رضى الله عنه) versified the thanksgiving event of embracing Islam in the following words:

صَدَقَ	اللَّهُ	حِينَ	هَدَى	فَوَادَى
إِلَى	الْإِسْلَامِ	وَالدِّينِ	الْحَنِيفِ	
لَدِينٍ	جَاءَ	مَنْ	رَبِّ	عَزِيزٍ
خَبِيرٍ	بِالْعِبَادِ	بِخَيْرِ	الطَّيِّفِ	
إِذَا	تُبَيَّنَتْ	رِسَالُهُ	عَلَيْنَا	
تَحَدَّرَ	مَعِ	ذِي	الْلُبِّ	الْحَصِيفِ
رِسَالُ	جَاءَ	أَحْمَدُ	مَنْ	هَدَاهَا
بِآيَاتٍ	مُبِينَةٍ	مِيزَانِ	الْحُرُوفِ	
وَأَحْمَدُ	مُصْطَقِي	فِينَا	مَطَاعِ	
فَلَا	تَغْشَوُهُ	بِالْقَوْلِ	الضَّعِيفِ	

(ايضاً ص 255)

“I praise Almighty (ﷻ), for guided my heart to Islam, the religion of Hanif. The religion that came from the Creator, Who (ﷻ) is Respectable and

Honourable, He (سبحانه تعالیٰ) is All-Knowing, and graces His (سبحانه تعالیٰ) slaves. When His (سبحانه تعالیٰ) Message is recited to us, ran the tears of all those who are wise and intellectuals. This is the message that brought Ahmed Mujtaba (علیه السلام), with such verses whose words sparkle. Ahmed Mustafa (علیه السلام) is the one, whom we owe our allegiance, no weak statement and below reason and dignity, talk can encompass his (علیه السلام) majesty”.¹⁶

HAZRAT ABU TALIB’S ODE IN DEFENCE OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH (ﷺ).

When Abu Talib observed that his close relatives were also playing leading role in hostility and enmity of Muhammad (ﷺ), he wrote an ode to arouse pride and prestige of them:

اری اخوینا من اپنا و اُمنّا
اذا سُئِلَا قَالَا اِلٰی غَیْرِ نَا اَمْرُ
بَلٰی لَہْمَا اَمْرُو لَکُنْ تَجْرِبَہَا
کَمَا جَرَّ جَمْتَ مِنْ رَاسِ ذٰی عِلْقِ صَحْرُ
اَخْصَ خُصُوصًا عَبْدَ بَنَسْ وَ نُو فَلَآ
ہَا نَبَدَ اَنَا مَثَلْ مَا یَنْبِذَا الْحَجْرُ

(جلد دوم ص 277)

¹⁶ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P. 169)

“I met both of my real brothers and conversed about the situation, they say nothing is in their hands but in the hands of others.”

“All was in their hands, but they both fell down from their dignity, as the stone falls from the mount of Zi-Alaq”.

“I specifically mention of Abd Shams and Naufil who have thrown us a far, as the sparking coal is thrown away”.¹⁷

Abu Talib also tried to arouse conscience of Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib through his poetry:

لعمري لقد كلفت وجدًا باحم
واخوت داء ب المحيب الموص
فلا زال في الدنيا جملاً لاهلها
وزيناً على رغم الدو الخائل

(ضياء النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم، جلد 2، صفحہ 393)

“I swear by my life! I love rather adore Ahmed (ﷺ) and his brothers, like the lover who always continue loving;

¹⁷ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P.185)

His (ﷺ) person is the beauty and elegance for the entire world, who is adornment for all, no matter the cheating enemies dislike him (ﷺ).¹⁸

Abu Talib also testified in verses the Prophet-hood of Muhammad (ﷺ):

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّا وَجَدْنَا مُحَمَّدًا
نَبِيًّا كَمُوسَىٰ خُطِّ فِي أَوَّلِ الْكُتُبِ
فَلَسْنَا وَ رَبِّ الْبَيْتِ تَسْلِمُ أَحْمَدًا
لَعَرَّاءَ مِنْ عَضِّ الزَّمَانِ وَلَا كَرْهَمَدَّ

(ضياء النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم، جلد دوم، ص 423)

“Don’t you know we found Muhammad (ﷺ), the Prophet like Moses and this was written in the previous Books;

I swear by the Lord (سبحانه تعالیٰ) of the House! We are not the people, who will hand over Ahmed (ﷺ) to them, distressed by the difficulties and the calamities of the time”.¹⁹

Ahmad Mahmood Uz Zaman, son of Allamah Bashir Hussain Nazim has rendered poetical translation of Qaseedah Burdah of Imam Busairi. The arduous task has nicely been furnished in the form of rhymed couplets. A few couplets are depicted here:

¹⁸ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P.263)

¹⁹ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P.283)

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا
عَلَىٰ حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

“O Protector send timeless, endless blessings and serenity;
On your beloved, the best in whole creation and humanity.

مُحَمَّدَ سَيِّدِ الْكَوْنَيْنِ وَالْاِنْسَانَيْنِ
وَالْفَرِيقَيْنِ مِنْ عَرَبٍ وَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ

Muhammad is a master of worlds and entire creations;
And the guide of races of Arabs and non-Arab nations.

هُوَ الْحَبِيبُ الَّذِي تُرْجَى شَفَاعَتُهُ
لِكُلِّ هَوَلٍ مِنْ الْاَهْوَالِ الْمُقْتَحَمِ

Allah’s dearest friend from whom intercession hope we
trace;
Each and every wretchedness falls down upon the human
race.

فَاتَّقِ النَّبِيِّنَ فِي خَلْقٍ وَ فِي خُلُقٍ
وَلَمْ يَدَانُوهُ فِي عِلْمٍ وَلَا كَرَمٍ

He outclasses all the prophets in his look and integrity;
No one can touch his level of knowledge and generosity.

يَا اَكْرَمَ الْخَلْقِ مَا لِي مَنْ اَعْلُوذُ بِ
سِوَاكَ عِنْدَ حُلُولِ الْحَادِثِ الْعَظِيمِ

O the kindest creation you are the only one refuge for me;
When the happening of worldwide Doomsday catastrophe.

فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا شَدَّهَا وَ اغْفِرْ لِقَارِئِهَا
سَائِلِكِ الْخَيْرِ يَا ذَا الْجُودِ وَالْكَرَمِ

Bestow relief to this poem's writer and person who reads;
I beseech to Allah !The- Generous One, The Merciful
indeed.

يَا رَبِّ بِالصُّفَى بَلِّغْ مَقَاصِدَنَا
وَ اغْفِرْ لَنَا مَا مَضَى يَا وَاسِعَ الْكَرَمِ

O Lord! On behalf of Chosen One fulfil our good aims I
claim;

The All Comprehending, the Generous forgive acts of
shame”.²⁰

Shaikh Maslehuddin Sa'di Shirazi wrote four lines
and became leading poet of Na'tia textual material. This
Na'atia poetical impression gained so much fame that its
recitation looks compulsory for all Na'at recitational
gatherings:

بِالْمَالِ	الْعَلَى	بَلِّغْ
بِجَمَالِ	الدُّرِّى	كُشِفْ
بِخِصَالِ	جَمِيعِ	حَسَنَاتِ
آلِهِ	و	صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ

He touched zenith by his excellence

²⁰ (Ahmad Mahmood uz Zaman, Mantle Ode, A.R. Printers, Islamabad,
First published November 26, 2018)

He distanced darkness by his beauty
Magnificent are all his achievements
Send blessings on him and his family²¹

Another masterpiece, classical, rather magnum opus
of Shah Abdul Aziz Mohadith Dehlvi got proverbial fame
due to the last Persian line of the two couplets, beside
Arabic ones:

يا صاحب الجمال و يا سيد البشر
من وجسك المنير لقد نور القمر
لا يمكن الثناء كما كان حقه
بعد از خدا بزرگ توئی قصه مختصر

Oh! The prettiest being and pinnacle of human race
Moon gets light from your enlightened face
Your praise knows no bounds
You are the most dignified after Allah's place²²

²¹ (English rendering by Ahmad Mahmood-uz-Zaman, Muhammad A
Balm for Sore Eyes, P.7)

²² (English rendering by Ahmad Mahmood-uz-Zaman, Muhammad A
Balm For Sore Eyes, P.6)

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EXAMPLES OF NA'ATIA POETRY IN DIFERENCT LANGUAGES

PERSIAN NA'AT:

After purchasing and freeing Hazrat Bilal (رضی اللہ عنہ) from the cruel pagan Umayyah, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (رضی اللہ عنہ) gifted him (رضی اللہ عنہ) to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

Maulana Jalaluddin Roomi (رحمۃ اللہ علیہ) versified the event with reference to conversation of the Prophet (ﷺ) and Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ):

سید کونین و سلطان جہاں
در عتاب آمد زمانے بعد ازاں
گفت اے صدیق آخر گفتمت
کہ مرا انباز کن در مکرمت
تو چرا تنہا خریدی بہر خویش
باز گو احوال اے پاکیزہ کیش
گفت ما دو بندگانِ کوئے تو
کردمش آزاد من بر روئے تو
تو مرا میدار بندہ و یار غار
بیچ آزادی نخواہم نہ نار

(Ibid P.219) (البيضاء جلد دوم ص 328)

“One day, the Chief of the world, the Prophet (ﷺ) expressed his displeasure to Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) , saying;

“O Siddique! Have I not said to you, to associate me in the honour of liberating Bilal?” As to why you have purchased him alone, O man of pure nature! Tell me why?

Hazrat Abdu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) replied:

“Ya Rasool Allah (ﷺ)! We both are the slaves of your street; I free him for the sake of your illustrious face.

“Ya Rasool Allah (ﷺ)! For God sake, keep me as your friend and the companion of the cave for I will never seek freedom from your slavery”.¹

These poetical lines show the lifelong pledge of sole obedience to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

ALLAMA IQBAL’S THOUGHTFULL EULOGIES:

Allama Iqbal described the wisdom and causes of migration of The Prophet (ﷺ) in his mathnavi “Rumuz-e-Baikhudi” as under:

¹ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.2, P.219)

عقدہ قومیتِ مسلم کسود
 از وطن آقائے ما ہجرت نمود
 حکمتش یک ملتِ گیتی نورد
 بر اساس کلمہء تعمیر کرد
 تا ز بخشش ہائے آن سلطان دیں
 مسجدِ ما شد ہمہ روئے زمیں
 آنکہ در قرآن خدا او را ستود
 آنکہ حفظِ جانِ او موعود بود
 دشمنان بے دست و پا از میتش
 لرزہ بر تن از شکوہ فطرتش
 پس چرا از مسکنِ آبا گریخت؟
 تو گماں داری کہ از اعداء گریخت
 قصہ گو یاں حق ز ما پوشیدہ اند
 معنیٰ ہجرت غلط فہمیدہ اند

(ضیاء النبی ﷺ، جلد 3، ص 43)

“My Lord, the Prophet (ﷺ) cracked the knot of the nationality of Muslims with his migration;

The wisdom of the Prophet (ﷺ) erected a nation on the foundations of the Kalmah Tauhid, (oneness of God);

By the grace of the king of the religion, all of the earth has been declared as mosque for the Muslims;

The personality, God (اللہ سبحانہ تعالیٰ) praised in the Quran and promised his (ﷺ) safety of life;

Awed by his glory, the enemy trembles all the time and by whose grandeur of the nature they are frightened;

As to why the Prophet (ﷺ) left his homeland, do you think he left due to the fear of his enemies?

The narrators of the event of Hijrah concealed the truth from us and took the Hijrah in the wrong sense”.²

Annemarie Schimmel has elaborated the text of a couplet of Allama Iqbal with profound apprehension. She states:

“Muhammad was for Iqbal the visible side of God’s activity. God could not been seen by mortal eyes---as Qur’an says lan tarani (لن ترانی)

(Verse 7/143) thou wilt not behold Me--- whereas this word is not applicable to the Prophet (ﷺ):

با خدا در پرده گویم با تو گویم آشکار
یا رسول اللہ! او پنہاں و تو پیدائے من

(پیام مشرق، غزل 44، ص 194)

² (Translated by Muhammad Qayyum Awan, Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.3, P 25)

“God (اللہ سبحانہ تعالیٰ) is my Hidden One, thou (ﷺ) art my Open One!

With God (اللہ سبحانہ تعالیٰ) I talk in veil, with thee (ﷺ) openly!³

At the start of journey, the Prophet (ﷺ) approached the house of Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ) and apprised him of invitation to accompany thereby. Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ) accompanied him (ﷺ). This event has been recorded in these lines by Allama Bazil, auhor of “Hamla-e-Hyderi”:

چنین گفت راوی کہ سالارِ دین
چوں سالم بحفظ جہاں آفریں
ز نزدیک آں قوم پُر مکر رفت
بسوئے سرائے ابو بکر رفت
پئے ہجرت او نیز آمادہ بود
کہ سابق رسولش خبر دادہ بود
نبی بر درِ خانہ اش چوں رسید
بگوشش ندائے سفر در کشید
چوں بو بکر زان حال آگاہ شد
ز خانہ بروں رفت ہمراہ شد

(غیاء النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم ص جلد سوم۔ 72)

³ (Translated by Annemarie Schimmel, Gabriel's Wing, P.154)

“The narrator narrates, the chief of the religion (ﷺ), under the auspices of God (الله سبحانه وتعالى),

came out from the siege of the clever nation and went to the house of Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه);

The Prophet (ﷺ) had informed him well before, so he was fully prepared for the journey;

The Prophet (ﷺ) when reached the door of his house, he heard about the journey;

when Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was apprised of the situation, he accompanied the Prophet (ﷺ) out from his house”.⁴

**THE POET OF “HAMLA-E- HYDRI” VERSIFIED THE
EVENT OF HANDING OVER THE KEYS OF SYRIA,
IRAN AND YEMEN, TO THE PROPHET (ﷺ) BY
ALMIGHTY ALLAH (سبحانه وتعالى):**

At the time of trench digging one rock could not be broken by some companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and he (ﷺ) himself took the spade and smote it to the rock thrice and revealed that the keys of the land of Syria, Iran and

⁴ (Zia-Un-Nazbi, vol.3, P.41, Translated by Muhammad Qayyum Awan)

Yemen have been handed over to him (ﷺ). The promise of Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) was fulfilled by the hands of Hazrat Umar (رضی اللہ عنہ) as these lands were conquered during his reign. Fulfilment of the promise of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) during the reign of Hazrat Umar (رضی اللہ عنہ) is a clear sign and sweet fruit of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) foretelling and his (رضی اللہ عنہ) caliph's (ﷺ) unconditional allegiance and loyalty to the teachings of his lord Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ). His (ﷺ) companions abided by the Prophet's (ﷺ) words throughout their lives. The poet of Hamla-e-Haidari (a Shia poet) versified the event in these words:

بپا سخ چنیں گفت خیر البشر
 کہ چوں جست برق فحست از حجر
 نمودند ایوان کسری بمن
 دوم قصر روم و سوم از یمن
 سب را چنیں گفت روح الامین
 کہ بعد از من اعوان و انصار دین
 بریں مملکت ہا مسلط شوند
 بآئین من اہل آں بگر دند
 برین مرثدہ و شکر و لطف خدا
 بہر بار تکبیر کردم ادا
 شنیدند آں مرثدہ چوں مومناں

(ضیاء النبی ﷺ، جلد چہارم، ص 37)

“The Prophet (ﷺ) said, by his first stroke the light emitted from the rock that lit for him (ﷺ) the palaces of Kisrah,

by the second stroke that of Rome and by the third that of Yemen".

Gabriel explained the cause to it that after him (ﷺ) the helpers and the lovers of Islam would occupy and rule these lands and would impose the laws of Shariah there.

On this beatitude, I thanked God and [loudly spoke/uttered] the Takbir each time,

the believers when heard the event they also [loudly uttered] the slogan of Takbir.⁵

Observing the historical facts of sacrifice of the companions (رضی اللہ عنہم) of the Prophet (ﷺ) Allama Muhammad Iqbal paid tribute to them as follows:

عاشقان او ز خوبان خوب تر
خوشر و زیبا تر و محبوب تر

⁵ (Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol. 4, P.25, Translation by Muhammad Qayyum Awan)

(ضیاء النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم، جلد 4، ایضاً ص 372)

“Beloved of the others used to be the most beautiful but my beloved is he (ﷺ), whose lovers are so beautiful that all the beautiful of the world have no comparison with them”.⁶

THE PROPHET (ﷺ) PUTS MANTLE ON THE DAUGHTER OF HATIM TAAI:

The moment the daughter of Hatim Taaï came before the Prophet (ﷺ), he (ﷺ) put mantle on her face showing his (ﷺ) blessings. Allama Iqbal versified the event in the following manner:

در مصافِ پیشِ آں گردوں سریر
دخترِ سردارِ طے آمد اسیر
دخترِکِ راجوں نبی بے پردہ دید
چادرِ خود پیشِ روئے او کشید

(ضیاء النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم، جلد چہارم، صفحہ 577)

“In a battle, before the king (ﷺ) whose throne is the sky,
Daughter of the chief of Tay tribe was produced as a
prisoner.

When the Prophet (ﷺ) saw the girl bare headed,

⁶ (Zia-Un-Nabi, P.240/4)

He (ﷺ) covered her head and face with his (ﷺ) own mantle.⁷

Allama Iqbal builds his hope upon Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (ﷺ) in these poetical words:

ما ازاں خاتونِ طے عریاں تریم
پیش اقوامِ جہاں بے چادریم
روز محشر اعتبارِ ماست او
در جہاں ہم پردہ دارِ ماست او

(ضیاء النبی ﷺ، ص 577/4)

“We are much barer than the woman of Bani Tay; we are bare headed before all the nations of the world”.

“O the Prophet of God (ﷺ)! You (ﷺ) are our hope and patron on the Day of Judgement as well as here in the present world”.⁸

We can duly say that Iqbal has very beautifully submitted our case as well into the most majestic court of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

⁷ (Zia-Un-Nabi Vol.4,P.370)

⁸ (Z.N..P.370/4)

ALLAMA IQBAL ON FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD:

According to Iqbal, the Prophecy kept evolving and all the Prophets were Muhammad (ﷺ) in the making. His poetic text is as under:

شعله ہائے او صد ابراہیمؑ سوخت
تا چراغِ یک محمدؐ بر فروخت
لا نبی بعدی ز احسانِ خداست
پردہء ناموسِ دینِ مصطفیٰؐ است
قوم را سرمایہء قوت ازو
حفظِ سر وحدتِ امت ازو
حق تعالیٰ نقشِ ہر دعویٰ شکست
تا ابد اسلام را شیرازہ بست
پس خدا بر ما شریعت ختم کرد
بر رسولِ ما رسالت ختم کرد
رونق از ما محفلِ ایام را
او رسل را ختم و ما اقوام را

“Its flames burnt a hundred Abrahams (علیہم السلام)

[so] that the lamp of one Muhammad (ﷺ) might be lighted.

No Prophet after me is God’s grace,

And veils the modest beauty of the Faith,

Muhammad (ﷺ) brought to men the people's strength

All rests in this, that still the secret guards

Of how the Faith's Community is one,

Almighty God (سبحانه تعالیٰ) has shattered every shape

Carved by imposture, and for evermore

Stitched up the sacred volume of Islam.

God set the seal of holy Law on us,

As in our Prophet (ﷺ) all Apostleship

Is sealed. The concourse of ending days

Is radiant in our lustre; he (ﷺ) was Seal

To all Apostles, to all Peoples we.⁹

Iqbal emphasised the importance of complete and perfect obedience of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for achieving goal of life:

مقام خوش اگر خواهی دریں دهر
بحق دل بند و راه مصطفیٰ رو

⁹ (Iqbal Poet Philosopher of Islam, Prof. Muhammad Munawwar, P132)

“If you want to attain your station in the world,

Then believe sincerely in one God (اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ تَعَالَى)

and keep to the Path of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).¹⁰

ABU JAHL’S CRY ON HIS FAILURE:

Light shows its significance and importance in the atmosphere of darkness and virtues shine against vices. During the days of ignorance viz, Jahiliyah, virtues of teachings of Muhammad (ﷺ) were resisted due to ignorance. Allamah Iqbal depicted the mental approach and enmity of Abu Jahl by highlighting his negativity against the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

The negative thoughts expressed by Abu Jahl, gave vice versa effect for the teachings of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), leaving the impression of devil’s cry for his failure:

سینهء ما از محمد داواغ
از دم او کعبه را گل شد چراغ

“Muhammad (ﷺ) seared my soul; his breath blew out the light that radiated from Holy Kaaba;¹¹

¹⁰ (Iqbal Poet Philosopher of Islam, Prof. Muhammad Munawwar, P.105)

Abu Jahl's cry further extends:

مذہبِ اوقاطح ملک و نسب
از قریش و منکر از فضلِ عرب
قدرِ احرارِ عرب نشاخته
با کفتانِ جش در سائتہ!
این مساوات، این مواخاتِ اعجمی است
خوب می دانم کہ سلمانِ مزدکی است
ابنِ عبداللہ فریشِ خورده است
رستخیزے بر عرب آورده است!
اعجمی را اصلِ عدنانی کجاست
گنگ را گفتا رِ سبحانی کجاست
چشمِ خاصانِ عرب گر دیدہ کور
بر نیائی اے زہیر از خاکِ گور؟
اے ہبل ، اے بندہ را پوشِ پزیر
خانہء خود را زبے کیشاں بگیر
گلہء شاں را بگرگاں کن سبیل
تلخ کن خرمائے شاں را بر نخیل
اے منات اے لات ازیں منزل مرو
گر ز منزل می روی از دل مرو
اے ترا اندر دو چشمِ ما وثاق
ملتے ان کنت از معتِ الفراق

¹¹ (S.A. VAHID, Glimpses of Iqbal, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Karachi, first edition 1974, p.174)

“[His, i.e. the Holy Prophet’s (ﷺ) religion is a deadly enemy of possessions and blood-relationship. Himself a Quraishite (a proud Arab tribe) he(ﷺ) denies the superiority of the Arabs (to other peoples),

He (ﷺ) has not made a correct estimate of the freedom-loving Arabs and has developed friendship with thick-built (or thick-lipped) Negroes.

This profession of equality and fraternity is an Iranian (non-Arab) stance.

I know perfectly well that Salman (who hailed from Iran) is a follower of Mazdak (totalitarianist).

The son of Abd Allah (the Prophet (ﷺ)) has been deceived by Salman and has delivered the Arabs to tumult and commotion.

How can an Iranian (a non-Arab) belong to the lineage of ‘Adnan’? How can a dumb person be equal to Sahban in eloquence?

Eyes of the Arab chiefs and men of distinction have lost sight in looking for you.

O Zuhair! Would you not come out of your grave (to sing the songs of the Arab's grandeur)?

O Hubal, the merciful master of this servant!

Take back your House (the sanctuary of Ka'bah where goddesses like Hubal, Lat, Manat and others had been placed by the Arabs of the pre-Islamic periods) from the hands of the irreligious folk.

Give their herd to the wolves in charity and turn their dates bitter on its tree.

O Manat and Lat, do not leave this abode, and if at all you must depart, then please do not forsake our hearts.

O you, who have strong ties with our eyes, if you have made up your mind to depart, then please give us some time".¹²

The style of Iqbal in the poem presented herein above provides high standard of creativity. Abu Jahl's lamentation and moan on the luminous of Islamic teachings, poses positive effect for understanding the difference between light of Islam and darkness of Jahiliya.

¹² (Prof. Muhammad Munawwar, Iqbal Poet-Philosopher of Islam, P.28)

Iqbal placed a detailed account of his intellect, spirit, feelings and sensitivity for expressions of the love he felt for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

In Asrar-e-Khudi i.e., the Secrets of the Self, he expressed:

در دلِ مسلم مقامِ مصطفیٰ است
آبروئے ما ز نامِ مصطفیٰ است

Every Muslim's heart is the home for Mustafa (ﷺ)

Our glory is the reflection of the name of Mustafa (ﷺ)

طور موجِ از غبارِ خانه اش
کعبه را بیتِ الحرم کاشانه اش

Sinai is but an eddy of the dust of the house of his (ﷺ).

For Ka'aba itself a Sanctuary his (ﷺ) dwelling place is!

کتر از آن ز اوقاتش ابد
کاسبِ افزایش از ذاتش ابد

Eternity is far far less than a moment of his (ﷺ) time-sense.

Pro-longation it earns from the purity of his (ﷺ) essence.

بوریا ممنونِ خوابِ راحتش
تاجِ کسریٰ زیرِ پایِ اقتش

A mat of rushes was obliged to him (ﷺ) for use as be.

Although on crown of Chosroes his (ﷺ) followers' feet did tread.

در شبستانِ حرا خلوت گزید
قوم و آئین و حکومت آفرید

In night-abode of Mount Hera, he ﷺ stayed in solitude.
Welded an Ummah, gave it law, Good Government ('s
beatitude).

ماند شب با چشم او محروم نوم
تا به تختِ خسروی خوابیده قوم

Night after night his ﷺ eyes remained deprived of wink of
sleep.
So that on the throne of Chosroes his ﷺ Ummah may rest,
sleep.

وقتِ هیجا تیغِ او آهن گداز
دیده او انگبار اندر نماز

In the thick of battle his ﷺ sword melted the iron strong.
While during prayers in his ﷺ eyes tears welled up in
throng.

در دعائِ نصرت آئین تیغِ او
قاطع نسلِ سلاطین تیغِ او

During his ﷺ prayers for help Divine his sword would
'Amen' say.
Exterminated race of Kings (terminated their sway).

در جہاں آئین نو آغاز کرد
مسندِ اقوام پیشین در نورد

He ﷺ laid in the world foundation of Laws, constitution new.

Empires of antiquity he ﷺ did conquer, sub-due.

از کلید دین در دنیا کشاد
بہجو او بطن اُم گیتی نژاد

By dint of key of religion the world's door opened he ﷺ

The like of him ﷺ the womb of Time didn't give birth definitely.

در نگاہ او یکے بالا و پست
با غلام خویش بر یک خواں نشست

All equal were in sight of his ﷺ the high and the low.

With his ﷺ own slave he partook of meals, (never raising brow).

روزِ محشر اعتبارِ ماست او
در جہاں ہم پردہ دارِ ماست او

On the judgement Day will be alone Sole trustee ours be.

And in this world, here also, provides us cover he ﷺ.

لطف و قہر او سراپا رحمتے
آں بیاراں ایں با عدا رحمتے

Be it his ﷺ favour or his ﷺ wrath, are mercy his ﷺ entire.

That for his ﷺ friends and followers and this for foes need dire.

آل کہ بر اعدا در رحمت کشاد
مکہ را پیغام لا تشریب داد

He ﷺ opened for his ﷺ enemies. The door of mercy wide.

And give to Mecca message of “No penalty. Free abide”.

امتیازات نسب را پاک سوخت
آتش او ایں خس و خاشاک سوخت

Distinctions of all pedigree. He ﷺ burnt to purify.

This stubble and rubble’s ashes. His ﷺ fire made these fly”.¹³

All couplets presented above carry poetic aesthetics and impressionistic force. There is no hyperbole and extravagance. Crystal clear reality lies deep rooted in each and every poetic line. The whole poem possesses attention catching power due to reality of emotions, feelings and for the simplicity of narrative.

¹³ (Poetic Translation by Maqbool Elahi, The Secret of Self,P.33)

These couplets carry clear description of teachings of Islam. The lamentation and moan of Abu Jahl may also be kept in mind at this stage.

Besides depicting deep sentiments and thought provoking couplets of Iqbal, it is important to emphasise here to suggest that Na'at poets and Na'at versifiers may adopt such models of matter and manner in Na'at's adornment.

The Quranic verses, the Holy Hadiths and the history of Islamic Caliphate are the main source of beautification and excellence in order to learn aesthetics of diction.

URDU NA'AT:

Hazrat Khadija (رضى الله عنها) reportedly uttered the words at the advent of first revelation for her beloved husband Muhammad ﷺ. They are the mirror that reflects the true picture of the character and the conduct of the Prophet ﷺ. She said consolatory words:

“By Allah! Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ) will never humiliate you (ﷺ). For by Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ)! You bolster up the ties of kinship, speak the truth, share the burden of others, earn for the disabled, entertain your guests

and render the aid during the catastrophes which befall in the way of truth”.¹⁴

Umm-ul-Mo'mineen Hazrat Khadija (رضی اللہ عنہا) had true knowledge about the excellent manners of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Her description and depiction of the perfect character of the Prophet ﷺ is excellent one.

The words of Hazrat Khadija (رضی اللہ عنہا) echoed in the couplets of Hali in his Mussadass are as under:

وہ بنیوں میں رحمت لقب پانے والا
مرادیں غریبوں کی بر لانے والا
مصیبت میں غیروں کے کام آنے والا
وہ اپنے پرانے کا غم کھانے والا
فقیروں کا ہلکا ضعیفوں کا ماوا
یتیموں کا والی، غلاموں کا مولا

Amongst the Prophets known as “Merciful,”

He ﷺ of the poor did all desires fulfil.

The one who helped the strangers in distress;

The one, who ﷺ felt the pains of friend and foes.

The Fakir’s friend and of the weak the prop;

Of slaves’ the master, of orphans’ ward.¹⁵

¹⁴ (Tradition No.4953, Sahih Bukhari, Vol.4, page 427)

¹⁵ (Art in Urdu Poetry, page 58)

In the couplets presented herein above, Hali did not go for ornamentation of verses but to simplify the same and no doubt, he attained the charming effects in clarity and simplicity of words. This is what needed for excellence of Na'atia poetry. Reflection of the soothing words of Ummul Momineen Hazrat Khadijah (رضی اللہ عنہا) is worth applauding and exemplary for following.

Hali further goes to enlighten his poetic renderings by narrating virtues of the good deeds of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

خطا کار سے در گزر کرنے والا
 بد اندیش کے دل میں گھر کرنے والا
 مصائب کو زیرو زبر کرنے والا
 قبائل کو شیرو شکر کرنے والا
 اتر کر حرا سے سوئے قوم آیا
 اور اک نسخہء کیما ساتھ لایا
 مسِ خام کو جس نے کندن بنایا
 کھرا اور کھوٹا الگ کردکھایا
 عرب جس پہ قرونوں سے تھا جہل چھایا
 پلٹ دی بس اک آن میں اس کی کایا
 رہا ڈر نہ بیڑے کو موجِ بلا کا
 ادھر سے ادھر پھر گیا رخِ ہوا کا

“The one who did condone all those at fault;

And found a place in all his enemies' heart!
 The one who could all turmoil easily ease;
 The gifted one who could all problems solve.
 Down from cave Hira to his people came
 He, with a formula of alchemy.
 And this could turn crude copper into gold
 And could distinguish what was base from pure!
 Arabia's shadow of illiteracy
 Was gone, and Revolution came forthwith;
 The bark had then no worries of the storm,
 For he had changed the way the wind did blow!¹⁶

Another example is of a Poem written by Shibli Nau'mani, narrating the incident of battle of Uhad. It teaches us the lesson of extreme love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

One of the un-precedented scenes was observed by companions of the Prophet ﷺ when they were back from battle of Uhad during which rumour of martyrdom of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was spread in Medina. The companions (رضى الله عنهم) of the Prophet ﷺ encountered a woman of Bani Dinar whose father, husband and brother

¹⁶ (Art in Urdu Poetry, P58)

were martyred. She was told of their death. She did not take its notice but asked how the Prophet ﷺ was? When she was told that the Prophet ﷺ was all right. And when she herself saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ, she asserted extempore, “The Prophet ﷺ is safe, then, all the calamities are worthless”.¹⁷

Allama Shibli Naumani has versified the event in a poem under the heading of “Isaar Ki Aa’laa Tareen Nazir” (The Highest Example of Sacrifice). He wrote:

کافروں نے یہ کیا جنگد احد میں مشہور
کہ پیہر بھی ہوئے کشتہء شمشیر دو دم

Pagans spread rumour of martyrdom of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

ہو کے مشہور مدینے میں جو پہنچی یہ خبر
ہر گلی کوچہ تھا ماتم کدہء حسرت و غم

When the news reached to Medina, the streets became sorrowful and mournful.

ہو کے بیتاب گھروں سے نکل آئے باہر
کودک و پیر و جوان و خدم و خیل و حشم

¹⁷ (Zia-Un-Nabi, 331/3)

Everybody had gone in restless state and children, old men, youngsters, servants and all slaves came out of their homes.

وہ بھی نکلیں کہ جو تھیں پردہ نشینانِ عفاف
جن میں تھیں سیدہء پاک بھی با دیدہء نم

Pious and modest women observing pardah also came out of home. Among them was also Hazrat Fatimah Zahra “Syyeda-tun-Nisaa”(رضی اللہ عنہا) with tears in her eyes.

ایک خاتون کہ انصارِ نکو نام سے تھیں
سخت مضطرب تھیں نہ تھے ہوش و حواس ان کے بہم

One woman from among good mannered and highly reputed Ansar was very much in a state of grief and lost her consciousness.

موقعِ جنگ پہ پہنچیں تو یہ لوگوں نے کہا
کیا کہیں تجھ سے کہ کہتے ہوئے شرماتے ہیں ہم

When reached at the sight of battle, the people said to her that what we should say to you, we are in a state of shyness.

تیرے بھائی نے لڑائی میں شہادت پائی
تیرے والد بھی ہوئے کشتہء شمشیر ستم

Your brother has been martyred; your father has also been succumbed to death.

سب سے بڑھ کر یہ کہ شوہر بھی ہوا تیرا شہید
گھر کا گھر صاف ہوا، ٹوٹ پڑا کوہِ الم

The most horrible news is this that your husband has also been killed in the battle. Your whole house has been ruined; a mountain of sorrow has come down to earth.

اس عقیقہ نے یہ سب سن کے کہا تو یہ کہا
یہ تو بتلاؤ کہ کیسے ہیں شہنشاہِ اُم؟

She modest woman after hearing all this, asked, let me know how the king of the kings of nations (Muhammad ﷺ) is?

سب نے دی اس کو بشارت کہ سلامت ہیں حضور ﷺ
گرچہ زخمی ہیں سرو سینہ و پہلو و شکم

All of them gave her glad tiding of the safe presence of Muhammad (ﷺ), though wounded were his most sacred head, chest, flank and belly.

بڑھ کے اس نے رخِ اقدس کو جو دیکھا تو کہا
تو سلامت ہے تو پھر بیچ ہے سب رخ و الم

She advanced and saw the sacred face (of Muhammad ﷺ) and said,

if you are safe, then every calamity seems free from hardship.

میں بھی اور باپ بھی شوہر بھی برادر بھی فدا
اے شہرِ دیں! ترے ہوتے ہوئے کیا چیز ہیں ہم

O “Shah-e-Din”, My father, husband, brother and I all be sacrificed upon you, we are nothing if you ﷺ are safely present.¹⁸

This strong impressionistic poem is very simple, authentic and truthful. Its detailed traditions are available in the books of Seerah.

The topic of the Holy Prophet’s ﷺ love is above each and every relation of life, how much, near, dear and personal may be. It has been rhymed in this poem. The occurrence of this practical example in the blessed presence of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ verifies the excellence of such precedence. The incorporation of such themes into Na’at literature would guide us towards the excellence of Na’at literature.

Allamah Iqbal pays homage to the Prophet ﷺ saying:

¹⁸ (Shibli Naumani, Kulliyat-e-Shibly, compiled by Allama Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Urdu Academey Sindh, Karachi, 1985, P.73...English translation by the author Aziz Ahsan)

تیری نگاہِ ناز سے دونوں مراد پاگئے
 عقلِ غیاب و جستجو! عشق، حضور واضطراب
 شوکتِ سنجر و سلیم تیرے جلال کی نمود
 فقرِ جنید و بایزید تیرا جمالِ بے نقاب!

(کلیاتِ اقبال، اردو، ص 406)

“With blessings of your ﷺ sight both have been benefited,
 the intellect as well as the passion;

Splendour of Sanjar and Salim, the kings, is manifestation
 of thy glory and humbleness of Junaid and Bayazeed is that
 of thy ﷺ beauty”.¹⁹

وہ دانائے سبل، ختم الرسل، مولائے کل جس نے
 غبارِ راہ کو بخشا فروغِ وادی ء سینا
 نگاہِ عشق و مستی میں وہی اول و وہی آخر
 وہی قرآن، وہی فرقاں وہی لیسیں وہی لٹا

(کلیاتِ اقبال، اردو، ص 317)

"The divine intellectual, the last of the prophets ﷺ, friend
 of all, who ﷺ blessed the dust of the passage with vastness
 of valley of Sina;

¹⁹ (Zia-Un-Nabi, Vol.5, P.38)

In the eyes of love, he ﷺ is the first, he ﷺ is the last, he ﷺ is the Qur'an, he ﷺ is the Furqan, he ﷺ is the Yasin and he ﷺ is the Taha".²⁰

At the time of Ghazwah-e-Tabuk, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called to contribute for the preparation of war and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (رضی اللہ عنہ) presented all of his belongings. Observing the assets, the Prophet ﷺ asked whether he had left anything for his household. And he (رضی اللہ عنہ) replied:

“I have left God (اللہ سبحانہ تعالیٰ) and His Prophet ﷺ in my house”. This event has been mirrored by Allama Iqbal in following verses:

اتنے میں وہ رفیق نبوت بھی آگیا
جس سے بنائے عشق و محبت ہے استوار
لے آیا اپنے ساتھ وہ مرد وفا سرشت
ہر چیز جس سے چشم جہاں میں ہو اعتبار
ملکہ یمین و درہم و دینار و رخت و جنس
اسپِ قرسم و شتر و قاطر و حمار
بولے حضور ﷺ چاہیے فکرِ عیال بھی
کہنے لگا وہ عشق و محبت کا رازدار
اے تجھ سے دیدہء مہ و انجم فروغ گیر

²⁰ (Zia-Un-Nabi, P.38/5)

اے تیری ذات باعثِ تکوینِ روزگار
 پروانے کو چراغ ہے بلبل کو پھول بس
 صدیق کے لیے ہے خدا کا رسول ﷺ بس

(کلیات اقبال (اردو) ص 225)

“Meanwhile came the friend of the Prophet ﷺ with whom the foundation of love is laid, He (رضی اللہ عنہ), the faithful, brought with him (رضی اللہ عنہ) whatever is available in this world. The Prophet ﷺ asked him (رضی اللہ عنہ) whether he had left anything for his household and he (رضی اللہ عنہ) replied:

“O the Prophet ﷺ! Whom from the eyes of moon and stars derive light, you are the sole cause of the universe, oh the Prophet ﷺ! As the lamp is to moth and the flower to the nightingale, you, Oh the Prophet ﷺ of God (اللہ سبحانہ تعالیٰ), are to me”.²¹

In the poem cited above, the main figure of Hazrat Abu Bakar Siddiq (رضی اللہ عنہ) has been focussed yet the theme relates to Na'at because of the reason that the central personality who is the centre of heartiest love in this whole event is no other than but Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ.

²¹ (Zia-Un-Nabi, vol.4, P380) Translated by Muhammad Qayyum Awan)

This poem carries a narrative style. Even then the creative impression is unique and worth adopting for the future poets.

Allamah Bashir Hussain Nazim had also translated the world famous “Salam-e-Raza”(Urdu) i.e., rendered by Ahmad Raza Khan Brailvi into English. A few verses are mentioned hereunder:

مصطفیٰ جانِ رحمت پہ لاکھوں سلام
شیع بزمِ ہدایت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon the Chosen one- The Soul of Mercy. ﷺ,

Countless salutations be upon the Divine candle of assembly of guidance (the straight path). ﷺ

مہر چرخِ نبوت پہ روشن درود
گلِ باغِ رسالت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Resplendent benediction be upon the Sun of the firmament of Prophet-hood. ﷺ,

Countless salutations be upon the rose of garden of apostleship. ﷺ

فتح بابِ نبوت پہ بے حد درود
ختم دورِ رسالت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Boundless benediction be upon the opener of the door of
Prophet-hood ﷺ

and Countless salutations be upon the end of the time of
Apostleship ﷺ

جس کے ماتھے شفاعت کا سہرا رہا
اس جبینِ سعادت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon the forehead of
happiness. ﷺ

which was embellished with the festoon of intercession.

وہ دعا جس کا جو بن بہارِ قبول
اس نسیمِ اجابت پہ لاکھوں سلام

The prayer, whose prime youth is the spring of acceptance,

Countless salutations be upon that gentle breeze of
approbation. ﷺ .

الغرض ان کے ہر مو پہ لاکھوں درود
ان کی ہر خو و خصلت پہ لاکھوں سلام

In short, Countless benedictions be upon his ﷺ every hair;

and countless salutations be upon his ﷺ every temperamental habit.

اہل اسلام کی مادرانِ شفیق
بانوانِ طہارت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon the noble ladies (رضوان اللہ علیہن) of purity

and the clement mothers of the people of Islam (رضوان اللہ علیہن).

جاں نثارانِ بدرو احد پر درود
حق گزارانِ بیعت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon the performers of right of allegiance (رضوان اللہ علیہم اجمعین)

And' benediction be upon the devotees of battles of Badr and Ohud (رضوان اللہ علیہم اجمعین)

وہ دسوں جن کو جنت کا مژدہ ملا
اس مبارک جماعت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon the body of the ten persons (رضوان اللہ علیہم اجمعین)

whom good tiding of paradise was given.

شافعی مالک احمد امام حنیف
چار باغِ امامت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon four gardens of leadership
albeit (رحمہم اللہ)

Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal, Imam
Malik and Imam Shafiee (رحمہم اللہ) .

ایک میرا ہی رحمت پہ دعویٰ نہیں
شاہ کی ساری امت پہ لاکھوں سلام

Countless salutations be upon the entire Ummah of the
Prophet ﷺ

because I have no claim over the mercy and clemency
exclusively.²²

I am informed by Dr. Saleem Ullah Jundran that the
“Salam-e-Raza” was also translated into English by
Professor G.D. Qureshi who was conducting research in
UK based university upon Imam Ahmad Raza Khan’s
poetry. Specimen of his work however, cannot be given
due to non-availability of the matter.

Dr. Saleem Ullah Jundran has also provided some
valuable material from the poetic work of Akhtar Raza
Khan Qadri, which is depicted here:

²² (Bashir Hussain Nazim, Salam-e-Raza)

Imam Muhammad Akhtar Raza Khan Qaadri Azhari's masterpiece poetical literary work is entitled as "Safina-e-Bakhshish" [The Ark of Salvation]. It has been transliterated and translated into English by Muhammad Aftab Cassim Qaadri Razvi Noori. This call-sic poetical work contains Na'ats and Manqabats in Urdu language. Some specimens from this beautiful artistic, aesthetic and devotional work are being presented for the readers:

حسنِ اوّل کی نمودِ اولیں
بزمِ آخر کا اجالا آپ (ﷺ) ہیں

“Husn e Awwal Ki Numood e Aw'waleen

Bazme e Aakhir Ka Ujaala Aap Hain”

“The First Splendour, From the First magnificent manifestation,

The Glowing Lamp of The Concluding Assembly, You Are ﷺ

میں تو ہوں بلبلِ بستانِ مدینہِ اختر
حوصلے مجھ کو نہیں قافیہ آرائی کے

“Me To Hun Bulbul e Bustaan e Madina Akhtar

Hawsle Mujh Ko Nahin Qaafiya Aara-ee-ke”

“I am Akhtar, The Nightingale of Madina’s Garden,
Exalted No Ambition Do I Have of Presenting Rhymes,
Ornamented”.²³

It implies that under the discussion of Na’at excellence standards whatever artistic capability or skill may reflect there, it cannot be the exact verbal reflection of the excellent manners of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Thus, the Na’at poet must never ever claim for his artistic or poetic perfection in the realm of Na’at writing. Despite his/her utmost highest level of artistic expertise, the Divine beauty or excellence of the most beloved Prophet ﷺ is far above level the human description depicts there.

So, it is pre-requisite for Na’at writer that his/her intention in Na’at writing should not be the “show” of his poetical expertise rather his/her intention in Na’at writing should be expression of highest and sincerest level of poetical effort for seeking the pleasure of Allah Almighty and His most beloved Prophet ﷺ.

²³ (Imam Muhammad Akhtar Raza Khan Qaadiri Azhari (2020). Safina e Bakhshish. Imam Mustafa Raza Research Centre, Overport, Durban, South Aftica, P.133)

Undoubtedly, intentionally, his/her whole poetical ornamentation should be in the words of Akhtar to be “the nightingale of Madina’s Garden”.

Dr. Riaz Majeed is fully involved in research and creative work of Na’at. He has attained high position for his renderings. A few couplets of his Na’at work are placed here as an example of thought provoking style. He has used this highly elevated poetical medium as an effective tool for character formation of this nation through blessings and bounties of Na’at medium.

ہے نعتِ نبی آج زمانے کی ضرورت
اس ذوق کو ہے آگے بڑھانے کی ضرورت

The Na’at of the Prophet ﷺ has now become need of the day;

Its fervour needs to be spread ahead and advanced further.

وہ روشنی سیرت کے صحیفوں میں ملے گی
ہیں زندگیاں جس سے سجانے کی ضرورت

The light needed for the illumination of lives [of human beings] can only be found in seerah scriptures containing examples of exemplary/excellent character.

اچھی سخن آرائی ہے یہ نعت کی لیکن
امت کو ہے کردار بنانے کی ضرورت

It is good to arrange Na'at writing and recitation gatherings,
Character building of Ummah, is however highly needed
(through Na'at readings).²⁴

Dr. Abul-Khair Kashfi states in a very memorable style:

افلاک کو جھکتے ہوئے دیکھا ہے نظر نے
ہے خواب گہر شاہِ مدینہ مرے آگے

My vision has seen the skies bow down in submission;

It is the abode of King of Manida ﷺ before me.²⁵

At the end of this Urdu renderings' portion, it would be
pertinent to conclude on a couplet of Sabih Rehmani:

صبحِ ان کی ثنا اور تو کہ جیسے برف کی کشتی
کرے سورج کی جانب طے سفر آہستہ آہستہ

O Sabih! The praise of him [Messenger of Allah ﷺ] and
by your words! It is like an ice boat journey towards the
sun gradually.²⁶

²⁴ (Riaz Majeed, Kulliyat-e-Na'at, p.918...Translated by the author Aziz Ahsan)

²⁵ (Translated by author Aziz Ahsan) (Nisbat, Kashfi.)

EXAMPLES OF ENGLISH POETICAL RENDERINGS:

The well renowned poet cum scholar of Hindi language Shakeel Farooqui has miraculously composed Na'at (almost extempore) on the request of the author (Aziz Ahsan). Shakeel Farooqui rightly indites: "Short of words, in homage I fall":

Homage to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)

Our Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is all time great,
Allah (سبحانه و تعالیٰ) blessed him (ﷺ) with a unique fate.
The Holy Qur'an from Allah (سبحانه و تعالیٰ), he (ﷺ) brought.
Peace and mercy he (ﷺ) always taught.
Rose he (ﷺ) gave in return for thorn,
No one alike him (ﷺ) will ever born.
His (ﷺ) life was simple, pious and plain,
He (ﷺ) always shared a sufferer's pain.
The world upholds him (ﷺ) as the noblest soul.
As the last Prophet he (ﷺ) played his (ﷺ) role.
Dearest to Allah (سبحانه و تعالیٰ), greatest guide,
Ideal of angels, mankind's pride.
Short of words, in homage I fall,

²⁶ (Jada-i-Rahmat, Translated by Dr. Munir Mughal, p.103)

Too great you (ﷺ) are, I'm so small!²⁷

Sensitivity of newer Muslims is matchless in the domain of faith consciousness. Poetry of Sister Camilia Badr presents a mirror for comparison of life style of general Muslims of present world with the required standards of simplicity and piousness introduced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). She renders:

I WONDER!

“If the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) visited you, just for a day or two,

If he (ﷺ) came unexpectedly;

I wonder what you'd do?

Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room,

To such an honoured guest.

And all the food you'd serve to him (ﷺ),

Would be the very best,

You're glad to have him (ﷺ) there.

That serving him (ﷺ) in your home,

Is Joy beyond compare?

The poetess raised questions as to what behaviour would be adopted by you in respect of your dress you wear,

²⁷ (Received through Email from the poet)

magazines on your table, live programme on TV, radio, etc.

She poetically raised some more questions:

Would you hide your worldly music?

And instead take Hadith books out?

Could you let him (ﷺ) walk right in,

Or would you rush about?

The most pinching question posed by the poetess is:

“Would you be glad to have him (ﷺ) stay, forever on and on?

Or would you sigh with great relief,

When he (ﷺ) at [last has departed]? ²⁸

All such questions are related to current day life style which does not match with the ideal life style of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). This conscience arousing style of Sister Camilia Badr is thoughtful, applaudable and adoptable in creative work of Na’atia poetry’s renderings.

Another example of simple rendering is that of Syed Ahmad Warsi (Late) who wrote an Epic Poem viz “Desert Orphan” in which he versified the words of consolation said by Hazrat Khadija (رضي الله عنها) and her cousin Warqa bin Naufil for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) on the

²⁸ (Na’at Rang 4, P.195)

occasion of the first revelation. Those versified words of consolation are as under:

116. She said, “Rejoice dear husband expel doubt and despair, You are the chosen Prophet (ﷺ) of God” (اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ تَعَالَى)

117. Hastened to her cousin Waraqa, blind eyed seer Deeply steeped in the revealed books of Jews and Christian scripture.

118. Hearing her version burst out ‘Khuddusun’! ‘Khuddusun’! ‘Holy! Holy!’ With extreme joy.

119. Exclaimed, “This is the same angel Namoos al Akbar To Moses, Jesus formally visited.

120. Muhammad (ﷺ) would be the Prophet of his (ﷺ). People”.²⁹

There is available Professor Syed Matloob Ali Zaidi’s collection of poems viz “POEMS” in which he whole heartedly enthusiastically attributed the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as an ideal of Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ تَعَالَى). Zaidi rendered thereby poetically as follows:

GOD’S IDEAL [THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD

(ﷺ)]

The painter combines colours and paints his ideal,

²⁹ (Marathon Achievements of a Desert Orphan, P.50)

the sculptor cuts stones and carves his ideal,

Zaidi mentioned musician, song composer and so on, who tries to make his ideal visualize. After depicting examples from his visual current environment, then he says:

But all colours fade, melodies die, all lights grow dim,

And all arts seem but mimicry,

When one imagines the most illuminous moment,

When God (الله سبحانه وتعالى) selected the essentials of virtues,

Heart of holiness, and beauties of Beauty;

And with masterful art created His Ideal;

Haven godly attributes, though in human form;

The lord (ﷺ) of the universe, though the slave of God (الله سبحانه وتعالى)

He (ﷺ) is the radiant Star on the forehead of Truth;

He (ﷺ) is the Crown of the prophets of the world

He (ﷺ), by God, is love of the Great Lord.

He (ﷺ) is the soul of the blessings of God.³⁰

No doubt Professor Syed Matloob Ali Zaidi has rendered his poem reflecting the most heartfelt and pure feelings in beautiful style.

Wolfgang Goethe (1710-1782) wrote a devotional poem for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with the caption of “Mahomets Gesang...Mahomet’s (ﷺ) Song”

Goethe renders:

“See the rock-born stream!

Like the gleam

Of a star so bright

Kindly spirits

High above the clouds

Nourished him while youthful

In the copse between the cliffs.

Ever, ever, on the rushes,

Leaves the tows’ flame-tipped summits,

Marble places, the offspring

Of his fullness, far behind.

Cedar-houses bear the atlas

³⁰ (POEMS, Page 50)

On His giant shoulders, fluttering
In the breeze far, far above him
Thousand flags are gaily floating,
Bearing witness to his might.

And so beareth he his brethren,
All his treasures, All his children,
Wildly shouting, to the bosom
Of his long-expectant sire.³¹

This poem got everlasting fame from the era of Goethe till date. In this poem Goethe adopted symbolic style to arouse curiosity and fondness of audience for apprehension of meaning, besides infusing in it aesthetics of poetic impression. The landscape shown is reflective of Makah Muazzamah, the native city of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). “Stream” symbolises the life giving attitude of him (ﷺ) towards mankind. The poem is worth reading from the first line to the end, but here only a few lines from the poem are depicted. The artistic imagery painted in the poem is really a model of excellence in the realm of Na’atia Poetry.

³¹ بہر زمان بہر زبان ﷺ, p 527

Excellence in poetic work of Na'at is needed in order to make impressive style and doubtless content. The poem of Goethe is highly reflective of pure feelings and delightful symbolization.

Dr. Saleem Ullah Jundran a well-known scholar of Na'atia English literature has versified the “Blessing of Durood-o-Salam” with religious fervency and reverential spirit. Excerpts from his poem are cited here:

“Blessing of Durood-o-Salam”

“Today in the state of hustle and bustle;

If you are dismal or in puzzle;

Send down Durood upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

Send down Salam upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

It will cure your tension and tear;

It will remove your worry and fear.

If you are addicted to forgetfulness;

What you memorize, can recall it less;

Send down Durood upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

Send down Salam upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

It will sharpen memory; enlighten vision;

It will broaden foresight; enlarge precision.

If your act of virtue is goal-less;

If you feel, your worship is soul-less;

Send down Durood upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

Send down Salam upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

Pious sentiments, it shall urge;

Ill inducements, it shall purge.

If you pray for death with Iman and Islam;

As a true Muslim, contented and calm;

Send down Durood upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

Send down Salam upon Muhammad (ﷺ)

Salla-Allah-o-alaih-i-wa alihee wa sallum;

It will give you glad-tidings and greeting;

While, hereafter life, its destiny meeting!

In Sha' Allah Ta'ala; In Sha' Allah Ta'ala.³²

Dr. Saleem Ullah Jundran further wrote a Na'at in the following manner:

The Beloved Propht's Advent (Sallallah-o-Alaih-i-Wasallun)

In the year of the Elephant, took place an event,

The most significant, the most jubilant.

It was the day of the twelfth Rabee'ul Awwal,

While, some starsin the sky were still dismay.

The dark global sparkled with brightest light,

The distressed humanity took great delight.

Alla exalted His last Prophet on the earth

To all, the source of mercy and mirth.

The compassionate, considerate to everyone,

Who blessed all and hated none.

His teachings shall for ever live,

³² (Photo copy received from the poet himself)

To followers, great success shall give.

Our love for him no boundaries know,

His sweet memory shall ever glow.³³

Ahmad Mahmood-uz-Zaman has attempted to render the life (Seerat) of the Prophet ﷺ into English poetry. His poetic work has been published with the title “Muhammad ﷺ, A Balm For Sore Eyes”. Example of poetic renderings of two short poems is depicted below:

MIRACLES ON PROPHET’S ﷺ BIRTH:

“Seal of Prophet-hood on untainted birth
Revealed eye-opener chronicles on earth
Idolaters’ fear was fed by the imparted news
When God’s blessing came to mend Holy fuse
Persian may fly meteoric great castles rock
Addiction to tyranny traced the Deity mark
In haste Palestinian Tabria Ocean dry to dust
On very day, devil-incarnated ready to burst
Millennium fire-temple fizzled out
Pyrotechnics in vain work it out
Idols, bronze fell flat with pathless minds

³³ (Saleem Ullah Jundran, Dr., Na’at Need and Scope in English Curriculum, 1998-99)

Sky guarded by meteor, Satan left behind³⁴

FILIAL FOSTERAGE MIRACLES

Drought years encircle Bani Sa'd respire tough
Halimah's memoir, a depth of misery enough
I aspire to shut door for the decorous child
Fate under duress, I have to return in wild
As I put Godsent in my bosom, breasts overflow
Our flock udders full, we slept best with less woe
Barren Bani Sa'd town gives ground to lush
Infant's fostering brings bed of roses to us
Holy Angels purify his ﷺ illuminated heart with snow
Humanity on cloud nine, God's mercy in Makkah now³⁵

Major General Muhammad Arshad Chaudry, author of "Moments of Reverence" comprised poems on life and teachings the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. His poem "Noble Names-I is depicted as a reference of poetic rendering near to Excellence:

Mohammad, for whom are all praises
Our hopes in good destinies that it raises

³⁴ (Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam. A Balm For Sore Eyes, P.1)

³⁵ ("Muhammad ﷺ, A Balm For Sore Eyes", page 2)

Aqib, now and last for ever
Ties with ignorance he came to sever
Fateh, the conqueror over coming
Secrets of life and death, for ever summing
Shahid, witness to our acts, here and hereafter
A definite guide for moments harder and softer
Hashir, will gather all on Doomsday
Greater preference for orders to pray
Rashid, well guided in all respects
A model for followers in all aspects
Bashir, bringer of tidings good
Ensuring happiness as it would
Nadhir, warner of future good and bad
Urging good deeds, to avoid feeling bad
Dai, calling with voice loud and shrill
Urging the faithful to be ready for a kill
Mehdi, the best guidance he had received
Providing best guidance, so none is deceived
Rasool, bringing message to mankind
A more lasting message, no one could find
Shafi, healers of evils and pains
Ensuring spiritual revival as one regains
Hadi, shows a direction of virtue
Follow path of Allah that is the clue

Mahi, infidelity he joyously sweeps
 What one sows, that one reaps
 Nabi, Prophet of God and messenger
 Urging the faithful, on God's caravan be a passenger
 Ummi, unlettered for them who could not perceive
 Unusual treasure of knowledge, was destined to receive³⁶

Jamil Naqvi's book viz "Lyric Homage...to the Last
 of Prophets Hadrat Mohammad (ﷺ)" comprises at least
 86 Na'atia poems. Jamil Naqvi rendered Na'at with
 considerable literary skill. He had equal command to write
 Na'atia poetry in Urdu and English. His Na'atia poem "The
 Unlettered Apostle" is depicted below:

"The Unlettered Apostle"

Unlettered and yet knower of world's secrets,
 Shadow less and still the world's canopy,
 'We would not have created the heavens
 if not created you',
 Is the superscript of the story of the universe,
 Cognition of the ranks of the Prophet (ﷺ),
 Is beyond the world's capacity and conjecture,

³⁶ (Major General Muhammad Arshad Chaudhry, "Moments of
 Reverence". P.49)

O you seated on the dais of life's assembly,
 O you the adorning of terrestrial globe,
 O you the signet of the prophetic station,
 Crown of the prophets' glorious train,
 O nightingale of the garden of Unicity,
 O you the splendour of the universe,
 O Ahmad (ﷺ) , Hamid (ﷺ) and Mahmud (ﷺ) three
 names in one,
 O you the chosen of the chosen, the elect of the elect;
 On the Judgment Day with the Divine Judge's leave,
 Undoubtedly you are the asylum of the world,
 O you whose name is sublime like Heaven,
 You are the supreme head of the world's masters,
 With your love our heart became alive,
 O you my soul and that of the whole cosmos.³⁷

PROPHIEM:

As has been placed in chapter 2, one prominent scholar from Bharat i.e., Khan Hasnain Aaqib has coined a word “Prophiem” as an alternative term for “Na’at” for English use. It deems fit to quote one of his Na’ats with the title of “Prophiem” here:

³⁷ (Jamil Naqvi, “Lyric Homage...To the Last of Prophets Hadrat Mohammad(ﷺ)”P.14)

“Prophiem”

It was around fifteen hundred years back
When the earth was actually off the track.
And Arabs, the Bedouin Arabs,
Were as astray as the wild shrubs.

Darkness, the blind darkness of ignorance,
Was all over the land; And the non-sense
Practices and rituals and customs,
Prevailed in air like the sound of drums.

Tribal enmities would, of course, last
For centuries, over a trifle issue of past.
And the prejudices of creed and caste!
Their area of influence was very vast.

The then Africa, Europe and Asia were no better
With a slight difference, they had nothing to offer.
They might be somewhat good in one respect,
But surely, there had been some dark aspect.

Then God was very considerate and kind
And He made up His mind,
To Arab, He sent His last messenger
Who was the entire world's purifier

From Almighty, let me say and mind,
He was a gift to the whole mankind.³⁸

MULTI-LINGUAL NA'AT SPECIMEN:

The well-known Islamic scholar Imam Ahmad Raza رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and renowned poet had gained fame in the realm of praiseworthy poems written for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The following couplets of his famous poem are mirror of outstanding craftsmanship and skill of usage of four languages in two poetical lines (misras) of one couplet.

لَمْ يَأْتِ نَظِيرَكَ فِي نَظَرٍ مِثْلٍ تَوْنُهُ شَدِيدٌ بَدِئًا جَانَا
جَگ راج کو تاجِ تورے سر سو ہے تجھ کو شہِ دوسرا جانا

None like you was ever seen or created;
Authority stands in your person consummated.

³⁸ (E:mail received on 29 November, 2018 from the Poet:
hasnainaaqib1@gmail.com)

البحر علا والموج طغى من يئس و طوفاں ہوش ربا
منجھدار میں ہوں گھڑی ہے ہوا موری نیا پار لگا جانا

Waves of stormy seas flout every rule;
Please rescue my boat from the whirlpool.

لک بدترنی الوجہ الاجمل خط ہالہء مہ زلف ابر اجل
تورے چندن چندر پر و کنڈل رحمت کی بھرن برسا جانا

Your Face is bright as the full moon;
Let your grace and light fall [shower] on me soon.³⁹

This devotional poetry of Imam Ahmad Raza is reflective of deep love for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). It reflects an ideal sense of poetic aesthetics. The poet has invoked the boundless blessings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to get free himself from all sorts of fears and dangers. Both rhyme and rhythm are very much appealing and look touching the core of heart.

³⁹ (Translated by Prof. G.D. Qureshi, provided by Prof. Dr. Majeed-ullah Qaudri.)

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PRECAUTIONS OF EXTREME CARE IN NA'AT DEVELOPMENT

As has already been delineated herein above that almighty Allah does not like those poets who engage themselves into aimless versification of couplets. Those who compose poetry for the sake of pleasure only and their poetry contains absurdity are liable of curse of Allah (سبحانه و تعالیٰ). The Qur'an says:

“As for the poets, the erring ones follow them;
See you not that they speak about every subject (praising people, right or wrong) in their poetry?
And that they say what they do not do.¹

Aimless activity of any human being is discouraged by Almighty Allah. Hence, the poetry which is most attractive mode of speech should be done with conviction and clear purposefulness. It should spread fragrance of beautiful positive thoughts for motivational purposes. It means the activity of writing poetry should be beneficial for society.

¹ (24-26:226, Translation DR.M.M.Khan)

“A poet appeared reciting poetry. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “seize the Satan”, or “catch the Satan”. It is better if the belly of man is filled with pus than to have it filled with poetry”.²

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has laid down the norms of practical poetic thought content by praising poets of his (ﷺ) own majestic court. There was no extravagance in their poetry. Reality was revealed in appropriate words. The poetic precedence of that time is also providing road map for poets of all times to come.

Excellence in Na’at depends upon the observance and adherence of classic guidelines given by the Qur’an and Hadith for Na’at writing. Na’at writing, reading and reciting must be based upon the Qur’an and Hadith. Some basic points are noted down here in this context:

1. Any event relating to the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) needs careful referential manner. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) says: “he who lies about me, will enter Hell”.³
2. Words containing dual meanings i.e., one positive and another negative should not be used in poetry. Aayat

² (Mishkat, Translation: Syed Anwer Ali, Vol.4, p.403 [Ref: Muslim 4596/25])

³ (Sahih Bukhari, vol.1, P.170)

104 of Surah Al-Baqrah may be consulted where addressing the Prophet (ﷺ) with the word “Ra’ina” is prohibited by Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ).

3. All types of allusions deriving attention towards the Tradition (Hadith) needs to be correctly and carefully made part of the text.

4. Any poetical imagination, allusion, composition or citation away from the sharia of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is totally prohibited into the sacred valley of Na’at. Self-manipulation or fabrication about the sacred Seerah events is not allowed at any cost even for a single incident. All types of such efforts will go against the Na’at Excellence Drive.

5. Yathrib is the discarded name of of Madina; hence this old name of Madina should not be used in Na’at.

6. Yazdan, Kibriya, Khuda, (یزداں، کبریا اور خدا) are not the Names of Almighty Allah, for the reason:

a. Yazdan, is the name given by fire worshipers to one who, in their belief, was Khuda of virtues. Against Yazdan they believed another Khuda of vices that was Ahraman. Yazdan is neither an Islamic word nor it is replacement of proper noun or attributive noun of Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ).

b. Kibriya, is an attribute and not noun. The word Kibriya (كبرياء) has been used in the Qur'an as attribute and not as noun. Verse No.78 of Surah John (Yunus عليه السلام 10) says:

“and that the leadership in the land may be for you two?”. Another verse is of Surah ‘The Keeling’ (Al-jasiya45,verse 37) “And to Him belongs all greatness in the heavens and the earth”. It means the word denotes leadership for people and greatness for Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ). Hence does not suit to use as attributive name of Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ).

c. Khuda is also not any name of Allah (سبحانه). This word also used in terms of plural as Khuda-oon. There is no God but He (الله سبحانه تعالیٰ) alone. Furthermore, the word is also attributed to human being as Meer Taqi Meer is attributed to Khuda-e-Sukhan. Na'at writers, reciters and lovers should keep the meanings of all the three words' wrongly used as attributive names of Almighty Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ).

My research thesis and another book contain some examples of erroneous usage of all such words and attributes which has been shortly discussed herein above from paragraph 1 to 6sub paragraphs a to c. The interested ones may consult those books. (اردو نعتیہ ادب کے انتقادی سرمائے کا تحقیقی مطالعہ----نعتیہ شاعری کے شرعی تقاضے) Urdu Na'atia Adab kay intiqaaadi surmaiyy ka tehqiqi mutalia...Na'atia Shairi kay Sharee Taqazay)

It is hoped with the grace of Allah Almighty (سبحانہ تعالیٰ) and with the boundless favours of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) that observance of above mentioned parameters will lead towards the journey of Na'at excellence. The true love, sincere effort, devoted moments, highest sense of reverence and above all the adherence to the Sgharia of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) will enable to adopt the path of Na'at Excellence destination in Sha'Allah Ta'ala.

AN ESSENTIAL INTENTION OF NA'AT POETS:

A pre-requisite condition for Poets of higher scholastic knowledge possessing spiritual insight have had been showing utmost care in dealing with the text of Na'at. Hazrat Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Janan (martyred in the year

1195 Hijrah and 1780 A.D.). He very well advised in his poetic expression:

خدا در انتظارِ حمدِ ما نیست
 محمد (ﷺ) چشمِ برادرِ ثنا نیست
 خدا مدحِ آفرینِ مصطفیٰ (ﷺ) بس
 محمد (ﷺ) حامدِ حمدِ خدا بس
 مناجاتے اگر باید بیاں کرد
 بہ بیتے ہم قناعت میتوان کرد
 محمد (ﷺ) از تو می خواہم خدارا
 الٰہی از تو حُبِّ مصطفیٰ (ﷺ) را
 دگر لب واکن مظهرِ فضولیت
 سخن از حاجت افزوں تر فضولیت

(ارمغانِ نعت، ص 99)

“Allah (سبحانہ تعالیٰ) does not expect any praise from us. Muhammad (ﷺ) [also] does not wish to be praised [by us]. Allah (سبحانہ تعالیٰ) alone is Sufficient to glorify His Messenger (ﷺ). Muhammad (ﷺ) is also enough for glorification of Al-Mighty Allah (سبحانہ تعالیٰ)!”

If you feel any desire for benediction then only one couplet is enough to render.

That is; “Muhammad (ﷺ)! I want to approach to the Al-Mighty Allah (سبحانہ تعالیٰ) through your majesty.

My Allah (سبحانه تعالیٰ)! I pray for enhancement in my ability to love your Prophet (ﷺ).

O Mazhar! Don't open your lips purposelessly for further rendering.

Beyond need utterance is useless”.⁴

Professor Abdul Majid Hameed writes in his “Fragrance of Madina” (Na’at collection) that:

“God [Allah] and angels glaze Muhammad (ﷺ), how can we praise Muhammad (ﷺ)”.

(P.15).

It is pertinent to quote Busiri’s (رحمته الله عليه) poetic advice to Na’at writers here for guidance in respect of reverential text of Na’at:

دَعِ مَا ادَّعَتْهُ النَّصَارَىٰ فِي نَبِيِّهِمْ
وَأَحْكَمْ بِمَا شِئْتَ مَدْحًا فِيهِ وَأَحْكَمْ

“What Christians claim for their Prophet (عليه السلام), set aside

Praise him (ﷺ) with asserted words of heart and mind”.⁵

⁴ (Armaghan-e-Naat, Shafiq Barelvī. P.99 :Translation, by author Aziz Ahsan)

⁵ (Translation: Ahmad Mahmood Uz Zaman, Mantle Ode, P.30)

CONCLUSION:

Devotional/religion based poetry remained neglected due to domination of secular and Godless artistic theories spread by certain literary circles in the early days of Pakistan. Most of the progressive writers remained aloof from religiosity in literary activity. This is why the recognized poets seldom composed Na'at in sizeable quantity.

Na'atia poetry, in those days, remained popular in the circle of poets having lesser creative ability. Standard poetic work was done by Religious minded poets but in scarcity.

With the blessings of Almighty Allah (سبحانه و تعالیٰ) Na'atia poetry saw the dawn on the sky of literature, in Pakistan, in the reign of Zia ul Haq. Most of the poets entered into the domain of Na'at. Progressive poets also touched the theme reverentially. And thus the poetic voices echoed high sounded. Published material of Na'atia poetry, by now, has touched climax in terms of quantity.

Hence, the need of spreading awareness of sensitiveness of this sacred theme was felt. For achieving the desired task, Na'at Rang was published in April 1995

with its first edition being “Tanqeed Number” (Criticism Number).

As I have said in Preface, I am involved in creating and promoting Na’atia literature since 1981. It was felt to break ground in English as well. So that English knowing poets may make themselves cognisance of parameters for judging aesthetics of their renderings, poetically and textually, too.

Though achieving Excellence in the realm of general poetry is not an easy task and Excellence in Na’atia poetry is more difficult to achieve. Yet the human being is bound to strive. Ghalib says:

گفتش ذره به خورشید رسد گفت محال
گفتش کوشش من در طلبش، گفت رواست

I asked! Is it possible to approach to the Sun by an atom? It (Wisdom) said “Impossible”.

I said to it (wisdom) my struggle for reaching up to the Sun? It (wisdom) said ‘just/right’.

(English rendering by author, Aziz Ahsan).

The effort to achieve excellence should however remain in currency with the hope of success. All Na’at

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“Those who strive hard for years, they find the way, and even if they are not blessed with the prized state of high attainments they are nevertheless awarded for their efforts”.

(Excerpts from the will that Khwaja Najeebuddin (رحمہ اللہ علیہ) had given to Hazrat Makhdoom-e-Jahan ...The Life and Teachings of Sufi Saint Hazrat Shaikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yhaya

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With regard to critical evaluations, concepts and thoughts held by Dr Aziz Ahsan are a significant and notable asset of contemporary Na't scenario. He will always stand out among the elite critics committed to promote trends of Na't literary criticism. In his published books, he has endeavored to observe and reflect the old and modern styles of Urdu Na't, its creative stimuli, artistic standards, and the exaltation of intellectual attributes in the scientific and critical perspective of esteem and veneration and majestic splendor of this genre. He examines the topic with deep analytical approach and generally keeps in sight its internal and external aspects before drawing conclusions. The extensive reference work pertaining to eastern and western literary sources appearing in his dissertations bear testimony to his vast knowledge and study. So far, his books and disquisitions have been published in Urdu language. Whereas this book 'Excellence of Na'at: Conditions and Standards' is taking his evaluative expression to new scope. The courageous and bold expression of his confidence and commitment to fix the conditions and standards of sublime Na't poetry deserves kudos.

In his books on criticism, Dr Aziz Ahsan, while discussing in detail the poetic and religious standards of Na't, has also appreciated the poets whose Na't poetry adorned with creative aesthetics have been produced as examples. In this way, he has not only explicated the standards on the basis of principles of criticism but has also widened the scope of Na't understanding by producing Na't poetry as illustrations of literary creations that are closer to the standards. He has maintained this practice in this English book as well. Another singular feature of this book is that translation in poetic or prose format of the Urdu, Persian and Arabic texts have been included, while some specimens of original English poetry have also been presented as exemplars. Thus the book not only acquaints us with the standards and their principles but also provides illustrations of the standards' observance. This feature will certainly interest the students of literature, and fond readers. The book has thus become an anthology of poetic presentations besides a scholarly document on criticism.

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